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AMERICAN WRITERS



Vol. II.

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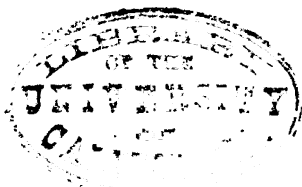
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April 7, 1897.

SKETCHES OF AMERICAN AUTHORS.

VOL. II.



BY

JENNIE ELLIS KEYSOR.

EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING COMPANY
BOSTON
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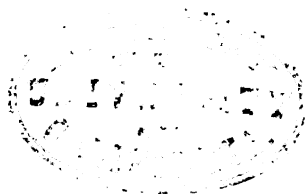
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THOREAU.



HENRY DAVID THOREAU.

"He took the color of his vest
From rabbit's coat or grouse's breast;
For as the wood-kinds lurk and hide,
So walks the woodman unespied."

— *Emerson.*

Of all the famous literary names that are associated with Concord, the name of Henry David Thoreau will ever stand prominent, representing a truly American genius and a character unique beyond any of his many notable contemporaries. His mission in life seemed to be to solve its great problems by retirement and communion with Nature. He could compress the universe into a patch of ground, and that even planted to unpoetical beans. He was an apostle to civilization, and yet the screech of the steam engine, as it whirled through the woods surrounding his Walden retreat, grated harshly on his sylvan thoughts. He never married, never went to church and never voted, yet he was companionable, religious and patriotic, a peculiar combination of qualities which Emerson with all his philosophy could not understand, nor Hawthorne either, with his

knowledge of dark things, nor even his devoted friend Ellery Channing, who saw in him the sweet poet and the aspiring naturalist.

Thoreau was born in Concord in 1817, in an old house, thoroughly New England in its architecture,



BIRTHPLACE OF THOREAU.

and on the old Virginia road. Here he lived until he was eight months old, and yet he says that he recalled even that early a great flock of geese being driven by the house. The change of residence was frequent with the Thoreau family, and nothing more delighted our writer than to relate in after years to a wondering audience of children, adventures which he had experienced in each of his several abodes — how

an old cow had tossed him in his little red dress in the yard of this house, or how a flock of little chickens bestowed themselves in an old oven until they had outgrown it, but persisting in occupying the same quarters, they grew fig-shaped from tight fitting.

Strange blood mingled in the veins of this peculiar man. His father was descended from French Huguenots. His branch of the family settled in the Isle of Jersey, and thence came to Massachusetts in early colonial times. Here the grandfather of our Thoreau married Jane Burns, a Scotch woman, thus adding a Scotch element to the family stock. Thoreau's father was a small, quiet man, in humble circumstances, who married Cynthia Dunbar, a true daughter of New England, and a member of the Dunbar family with whom Daniel Webster was so intimate. The quietness of John Thoreau was more than counterbalanced by the almost incessant talk of his worthy wife. It is said that a "morning call" from this woman usually meant the suspension of all work for the rest of the forenoon in the good family who were favored by her presence. She was rather giddy in her dress, too, as is well illustrated by the following incident: When about seventy years old she called upon Aunt Mary Emerson, then over eighty, wearing broad, bright-colored ribbon bonnet-strings. As she arose to go,

the invincible Aunt Mary said, "Mrs. Thoreau, perhaps you noticed that I kept my eyes closed during most of your call. I did so because I did not wish to look on the ribbons you are wearing, so unsuitable for a child of God and a person of your years."

May we not see in Henry Thoreau characteristics of each national element which had gone into the family stock? He was erratic, as the French are liable to be, subtle and somewhat narrow, as is often the case with the typical Scotchman, and devoted to "high thinking and plain living," as are the true sons of New England and especially of Concord.

Henry was the third of four children born to John and Cynthia Thoreau. These children, two boys and two girls, all became school teachers. They added to great proficiency in that profession something more—they seemed to possess in a high degree the material which makes men leaders. They did not seem like the ordinary men and women one meets with every day. Life seemed to have a more serious meaning to them than to most others. One who knew them well says, "Without wealth or power or social prominence they still held a rank of their own, in scrupulous independence, and with qualities that put condescension out of the question."

As a child Henry Thoreau was noted for his

fortitude and sagacity. When only four years old he expressed himself as not desirous of going to heaven,



THOREAU HOUSE, PRINCE STREET.

because he could not take his old sled with him which
"the boys say is not shod with iron and is not worth

a cent." At the age of ten Channing says of him, "He had the firmness of an Indian and could repress his pathos, and had such seriousness that he was called 'judge.' An incident is related to illustrate this: He carried his chickens to a tavern near by to sell. The proprietor said 'all right,' and to cruelly try the boy opened the basket and one by one wrung the necks of the pets before the boy's very eyes. Outwardly he gave no sign though his heart was almost broken.

Among his playfellows he was popular, for he was sturdy and full of playful tricks. At home he was always a favorite, and his affection for his home and the friends there never waned. This is what Channing says of his place in the home and others bear similar testimony, in spite of a general belief that Thoreau was a cynical and churlish man instead of the happy, healthful one his friends revered. In his own home he was one of those characters who may be called household treasures; always on the spot with skilful eye and hand to raise the best melons, plant the orchard with the choicest trees, and act as extempore mechanic; fond of pets — his sister's flowers or sacred Tabby — kittens being his favorites — he would play with them by the half hour."

At the age of sixteen he entered Harvard University,

from which he graduated four years later. His expenses were light when compared with what the youth must now spend to take a course in college. These were paid by all the family, each one helping a little. He was not an unsocial fellow while in college, still he never gathered around and riveted to him such friends as many of our noted men and women gather in the course of a college career. With his instructors he was not a great favorite for he wished to study as he liked, not to be governed by any definite plan as laid down by the college authorities. His reading was extensive and when he graduated he did so with a high reputation for general scholarship. The year he left Cambridge began that intimacy with Emerson which was a power for good in each of their lives. Emerson's attention was first particularly attracted to Thoreau by finding that the main thought in one of his lectures was one which Thoreau had carefully elaborated in his diary. The two men were thinking in the same line, and it is little wonder that the younger became a most willing learner at the knee of the elder, the Concord sage. Of all his friendships this one with Emerson was most important, for out of it sprang most of the others — with Alcott, Channing, Hawthorne and Margaret Fuller. With Thoreau's early training and his natural inclinations relative to

abolition we are not surprised to find John Brown among his choice friends. On this subject Thoreau's thoughts were so rigid that he refused to pay taxes to a government that allowed slavery, and was promptly marched off to jail for his refusal. Such a soul as this must certainly have found rare companionship in a man of John Brown's beliefs and devotion. Thoreau soon became one of that circle of philosophers and experimentalists that has made Concord famous, and whose experiments at Fruitlands, Brook Farm and Walden Hermitage have shown that the Acadian age of harmony is not yet come, nor are the times ripe for it. Thoreau lived with Emerson two years just previous to his residence at Walden and again for a year after the latter's return from Europe, and, when the nature-loving Henry was no more, this great friend did him loving service in a biographical sketch only exceeded in value and extent by the life written by Thoreau's other intimate friend Ellery Channing.

There is little romance, in the ordinary acceptance of the term, in Thoreau's life — no love affair, no marriage, no children. Nature was his sweetheart, and to her he seemed inseparably united and the birds and the squirrels were his children in the sense that he cared for them.

In a life of this tenor an episode such as Thoreau's

residence for two and a half years on the edge of Walden Pond is romantic enough. When a mere child riding with his grandmother on the edge of this little lake he had liked it very much and wished then that he might some time live there. The wish had lived with him and grown, too, as his taste for natural history developed and now, more than six years after graduation with a goodly reputation as a school master, he was about to put in operation his long cherished plan and live in quiet on the wooded border of this beautiful little lake — to study Nature more uninterruptedly and let her lessons sink deep into his inquiring soul without any discordant notes from the society of men not in sympathy with him. His object does not seem to have been to banish himself altogether, for he expressly wished to accommodate one or two visitors with whom he might converse on his favorite subjects. He had chairs for three. Any more must resort to standing should they chance in their rambles upon this solitary sage.

Thoreau had built his own log hut, ten by fifteen feet, he had made the furniture it contained and so he raised and cooked most of his own food, displaying as much pride in getting up a *cheap* dinner as many a rich man does in preparing a sumptuous banquet. He hoed his beans, cleaned his hut, and wrote and

thought through the livelong day, elevating the most humble duties by thoughts sublime enough for Plato. If in scrubbing his hut, he set all his furniture out of doors, it spoke to him of its enjoyment of the pure air and the sunshine, as so many children might have done, and he hated to remove the simple home-made



THOREAU CORNER IN ANTIQUARIAN HOUSE — CONCORD.

articles to the prison of indoor existence again. Thus he made thought *transcend* the lowliest task — he was indeed for himself and for those in sympathy with him *living out transcendentalism*. There was but one room to his simple dwelling — kitchen, larder, study and bed-room all in one. As for his parlor — his *talking room*, his place of communion — that was out of doors where his friends the birds, the serpents and the squirrels were — where all could bathe in the

glorious sunshine and watch the matchless play of color on the placid bosom of the lake. Now that the



VISITOR'S MEMORIAL ON SIGHT OF THOREAU'S HUT.

hermit is gone, so likewise is the hermitage, and only a pile of stones, constantly increasing from the hands of loving pilgrims, marks the spot where Thoreau

thought away the days and nights of more than two happy years.

During his residence here, he had edited his first work, "A week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers," and he gathered material for his great work, "Walden," which must ever remain the most popular of his works, not only from its own inherent charm, but for the experiments, as well, which gave rise to it. To him who carefully peruses this work, the sights and sounds in Nature will always mean more. Perhaps many parts of it might as well have been written elsewhere as regards their revelancy to Walden, but there is the smack of fresh breezes, clear water and verdant trees in every page of it. In addition, Thoreau had thought out some of the lessons of life to his own satisfaction, so that his return to civilization cannot be set down as a tacit acknowledgment of failure on his part. He had gone out to Walden with a work to accomplish and he certainly had succeeded in part.

There were many things which made Walden attractive to a man of Thoreau's nature and a resident and lover of Concord, from which town it was only a mile distant. Besides its natural charms, which were many, there were associations most interesting. Not far from Thoreau's hut was Brister's Hill, where

the emancipated slaves had settled in the early times of abolition. Here grew up characters quite necessary to any complete history of the section — black Zilpha, the dusky weaver whose song all day kept time to the Walden woods, or Cato Ingraham or John Jack, her dusky brethren.

The occupant of Walden Hermitage must certainly have been thoroughly acquainted with out-door life, as every page of his work shows. He loved every form of life and studied it with the affection of a lover and the care of a scientist. Out-door exercise of every kind he enjoyed. Indeed the amount he wrote depended on the length of his walk or other exercise. Shut up in the house, he wrote nothing at all.

Early in life he had been fond of this sort of life. Before leaving college he had made a collection of Indian relics. He collected natural specimens for Agassiz, who found them valuable and, ever after, cultivated the society of the collector. His habits of close observation and his constant philosophizing made him an extensive traveler even though he never crossed the ocean nor saw the far West.

We have good evidence that the whole of the money Thoreau received for his writings could never have exceeded a few hundred dollars a year at the very best, not enough to supply even his simple wants.

He had to have recourse, therefore, to other ways of eking out his slender income, for independence was one of his strongest characteristics. In his necessities he did gardening, built fences, white-washed, made pencils, and surveyed land. He helped his father



THOREAU HOUSE.

build his house and he built his own hut at Walden. He did everything well and, far from being ashamed of such lowly occupations, he took a real pride in being able to make himself useful in many ways. The clothes he enjoyed most were those of a laborer.

In his enthusiasm in out-door studies he forgot himself entirely and often needlessly and cruelly exposed

his body — wading in cold water, sleeping out cold, damp nights without sufficient covering, and other similar exposures. Such neglect of himself developed in him consumption, to which he was predisposed and of which he died while yet a young man. The last year of his life was a most trying one, yet he never lost his patience or serenity at the slow and painful approach of death. He died in May, 1862, a pleasant time certainly, for one who loves the woods, to be gathered to the earth. He did not regret to leave the world and so expressed himself to Alcott, but he left behind him those to whom his absence was irreparable — some to whom the world could never seem the same now that Henry was gone. His friend Channing placed this inscription on his casket, "Hail to thee, O man! who has come from the transitory place to the imperishable."

He was buried in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery beside other members of his family and near the Emersons and Hawthornes — neighbors in death as they had been in life.

QUESTIONS ON THOREAU.

Locate Concord and tell some of the famous people who, at different times, have made this their home.

What can you say of the ancestors of Thoreau?

What characteristic traits did he draw from these ancestors?

Where is Walden Pond?

Why did Thoreau retire to this place?

Describe his hut here.

What literary work was especially the outgrowth of his life at Walden?

Who were Thoreau's particular friends?

Who was his most intimate Concord friend?

How did Thoreau make a living?

What qualities in Thoreau are worthy of imitation?

Would you have enjoyed being a friend of Thoreau's?

Give reasons for your answer.

Explain, as far as you can, the term transcendentalism.

How does Thoreau identify himself with this movement?

Describe the cemetery where Thoreau is buried.

ESSAY SUBJECTS.

A Stroll about Walden Pond.

A Concord Tea-Party.

A Day with Thoreau in His Hut.

The Influence of a Solitary Life.

Sleepy Hollow Cemetery — Its Illustrious Inhabitants.

OUTLINE FOR HENRY D. THOREAU.

I. Concord.

1. Its location and natural surroundings.
2. Its place in a literary history of the United States.

II. Life — without romance.

1. Descent from Huguenot and Scotch ancestors.
2. A sturdy child possessing the characteristics — fortitude, sagacity and independence — which marked him as a man.

3. A graduate of Harvard University—a pupil of Agassiz.
 4. An intimate friend of Emerson. Reciprocal influence of this friendship very great.
 5. “The Hermit of Walden,”—residence of two and a half years on the edge of Walden Lake, in order to study Nature more intimately.
 6. A prose poet—a man of lowly occupations.
 7. Exposure developed consumption.
 8. Death in 1862. Burial in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery.
- III. Works. Out-door classics, poorly paid for.
Walden, the best known.
The Maine Woods, A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers, etc.



WILLIS.



NATHANIEL P. WILLIS.

“ There’s Willis, so *natty* and jaunty and gay,
Who says his best things in so foppish a way,
With conceits and pet phrases so thickly o’erlaying ’em,
That one hardly knows whether to thank him for saying ’em.
His prose has a natural grace of its own,
And enough of it, too, if he’d let it alone,
But he twitches and jerks so one fairly gets tired,
And is forced to forgive where he might have admired.
Yet whenever it slips away free and unlaced,
It runs like a stream with a musical waste,
And gurgles along with the liquidest sweep,
Tis not deep as a river, but who’d have it deep?

.
His nature’s a glass of champagne with the foam on’t,
As tender as Fletcher, as witty as Beaumont;
So his best things are done in the flush of the moment:
If he wait, all is spoiled: he may stir it and shake it.
But, the fixed air once gone, he can never remake it.
He’d have been just the fellow to sup at the Mermaid.
Cracking jokes at rare Ben, with an eye to the bar-maid,
His wit running up as canary ran down,—
The top-most bright bubble on the wave of The Town.”

— *Lowell's "Fables for Critics."*

On the twentieth of January, 1806, in Portland,
that city by the sea, famed for its beautiful harbor and
delightful homes, the subject of this sketch was born.
Two years later, the same city gave to us and to the

world, that favorite singer of two continents, Henry W. Longfellow. In almost every regard these two neighbor poets may be contrasted: Willis was known to the world as a poet, an essayist, a traveler, and a polished man of the world, while Longfellow was yet at school, we may say, at least, when he was preparing himself by careful study for his position in Harvard University. While Longfellow enjoyed the expressed love and admiration of every one, Willis was doomed to fight for every inch of his standing, slandered and abused, sometimes justly, it is true, but oftener without any cause. In considering this last point, we must not lose sight of the fact that, while Longfellow was pursuing the quiet life of a college professor and poet, Willis was engaged in journalistic duties, the most warlike of the peaceful callings.

His parents were Puritans of the most pronounced type who always considered their children's religious training of the very first importance. To dance, to attend the theatre were sins of deep dye. His father and his grandfather were both journalists and to the former of these men we owe the first religious paper in the world, *The Boston Recorder*. To him we also owe that paper for young people, so well and favorably known to-day, *The Youth's Companion*, which was founded in 1827, to meet a need which the elder

Willis had observed by the eagerness with which the young people sought the "Young Folks' Corner" in the "Recorder." He had noticed, too, how his own children enjoyed the Bible stories, which he told them as they gathered about the open fire, where the old Dutch tiles illustrated what he was narrating. To this last practice of his father's, may we not trace that intimate knowledge of the scriptures, which the son displayed in later days, in his Bible poems, such as "Absalom" and "Jephtha's Daughter," by which he is best known to-day?

His mother, to whom he was most devoted throughout her long life, gave him more of his characteristics than he inherited from his father. He used to say, that the quicksilver flowing in his veins came from his mother. To this mother, he has inscribed many of his poems, One, perhaps his very best, "Better Moments," is throughout a shining tribute of a son to his mother.

Nathaniel was the second of nine children, all of whom grew to maturity and three of whom attained literary distinction, our poet, Sarah, his youngest sister, better known by her *nom de plume* of "Fanny Fern," and Richard, the youngest brother, an accomplished musician, a poet, and the editor for many years of the "Musical World."

When our author was six years of age, the family removed to Boston. The child carried with him through life few recollections of his early home, so he gives us no pleasing reminiscences of them as Longfellow so often does. He entered one of the Latin schools of Boston where he made good progress. He remembered Emerson, then a lad in the same city, merely as a boy whose father was a Unitarian, and, perhaps, classed him with those saucy youths, who named the church in which Willis's father was a deacon, "Brimstone Corner." As the boy developed, it became evident that he would be capable of a college education. The question of what preparatory school and what college to send him to became the all absorbing one. Harvard was not to be thought of with the Unitarian influence leading as it did, so Yale was selected as an institution sufficiently calvinistic to suit the straight old deacon. For the same reason, Phillips Academy, at Andover, was chosen as a place of preparation. While preparing for college, the youth kept a diary, wrote some poetry, and following the spirit of a revival conducted in the school, united with the church.

Of the college career of Willis, there is much to say. Rarely has a man been so impressed and expanded by a similar experience. While he was not

the most diligent student, and never a great reader, it gave him a polish, which clung to him through life. Only in Latin studies did he gain distinction; mathematics were his aversion. He soon showed his mates and instructors, that he, the dandified young man of the golden hair and deep blue eyes, of whom they were never over-fond, was a poet, whose lines were already commanding a goodly audience in widely different sections. Once he captured a fifty dollar prize by one of his poems and as valedictorian of his class, he delivered the class poem. If he was not a great favorite in the college the fact did not trouble him for he preferred the society of the town to that of the University. His deference to ladies, his beauty, and immaculate manner of dressing had already won for him an enviable place in the society of New Haven, then a town of nine thousand people, with no railroad exit, but yet "the city of elms," and of comfortable stately homes.

In the last years of his course, rumors reached his home of dissipation and neglect of studies, but there was slight foundation for such rumors. The former never went further than a walk by moonlight with a pretty girl, or a ride after a fast horse. The latter report could have been suggested only by some college frolics that even the best of students sometime or

other indulge in. It must be remembered, that our author's time at college was that period in college government, when painting the president's house red or white or blue in the lone watches of the night, or putting his inoffensive cow in the belfry, were great achievements. Twice he was suspended for short intervals, once for refusing to inform against a companion, and again for joining a majority of his class in a rebellion against "conic sections." Slight as were these offences, they stood out large and bold in the eyes of his Puritan parents, whose hearts were sorely grieved by them.

In 1827, after spending his senior vacation of six weeks on the Erie Canal, then recently opened, he took his degree. The world was now before him as it has been to many a young man since. To him, however, his further course was plain — a literary life with all its ups and downs and its poor remuneration was what he was destined to by inherited tendencies as well as by his own desires, and so he began that stormy life which only Cooper among our literary men can match for general unpleasantness, coupled with distinction on both sides of the Atlantic.

He was first employed by Samuel G. Goodrich, the enterprising publisher of Boston, but better known as "Peter Parley." It was the period of so called

annuals, or gift books, works sumptuously gotten up in full morocco binding, heavy paper, gilt edges, steel engravings, very *mezzotint* in tone, with poetry and prose usually written by those who could match in writing these works of the engraver's art. Goodrich issued one of these books annually and to Willis he gave the work of editing "The Token," as it was called, for 1829. There were many notable contributors to this work besides Willis; among them Hawthorne, that other Nathaniel of whom Goodrich speaks almost slightly when comparing him with Willis.

Time, and not "Peter Parley," it seems, was destined to classify these two men, the one first among the first class, the other first only in a class far below that in which must always stand our prose romancer, Nathaniel Hawthorne.

The same year in which Willis's edition of the "Token" appeared he began a periodical of his own, *The American Monthly Magazine* which lived only a little over two years. It was a daring project for a young man without means, only a year and a half out of college, and with few to help him. The writers to whom we have looked for more than half a century for sound and entertaining articles had not yet really appeared. Motley and Appleton were about the only contributors on whom Willis could rely. It naturally

followed that Willis had to write much of his magazine himself, for which he was variously taken to task by certain New England editors who would never have had the courage to do what he was trying to do. When the concern failed he found himself in debt and with a feeling of enmity toward Boston from which he never recovered. Two other events had come into his life not calculated to sweeten a man's temper or give him a sense of longing for the city in which they occurred. One was a love affair with Mary Benjamin and the other was excommunication from the church to which he belonged. In the first he had honorably won the young woman's consent, but relatives interfered so strenuously that the engagement was broken. That he continued to love her for years we know by passages in his letters and by some of his best verses addressed to her from across the water. His dismissal from his church, by public excommunication, seems hardly warranted by the facts that he attended theatres and was fond of dancing, but the Puritan authorities thought differently and acted accordingly.

He now left Boston for New York, merging what was left of the *American Monthly* with *The Mirror* of that city, of which paper he became associate editor. *The Mirror* had been founded by Samuel Woodworth, justly famous as the author of "The Old Oaken

Bucket," and George P. Morris, the song writer of America. Willis and Morris now undertook the management of the paper alone and began a friendship which lasted through life.

Willis had traveled about considerably in this country, visiting various cities and writing them up in a graphic, interesting style for *The Mirror*. These "Pencilings by the Way," which he pleased to call his sketches, were so popular with readers that it was decided to send the young journalist to Europe to continue his sketches in weekly letters. After some scurrying about, five hundred dollars was raised and Willis sailed for Havre. He was to write one letter a week, for which he was to receive ten dollars. The letters at once gained immense popularity, being reprinted many times.

It must be remembered that a European trip at this times meant a very different thing from such a trip to-day. Our first steamer had yet to cross the ocean, so a sailing craft with its slow time and other inconveniences was the only mode of transit; expenses were heavier, places on the other side were less accessible than now. The difficulties attending such a trip were so great that only one American went then where a thousand go to-day. There was, however, this advantage: places of interest had a freshness then

which they will never again possess, so that the most general descriptions of them were magic words to the ordinary mind. The one who successfully writes letters of travel now must go out of the beaten track and study some particular phase of life or country, for we have become so traveled that what is merely general has no charm for us.

Willis's genius was of such a nature that the flush of travel kept it stimulated; indeed, it needed just such spurs to keep it in full motion. Politics did not interest him, so he had to depend upon social aspects and personal sketches for interest in his letters. In this line he had always had a peculiar knack which now served him well. The flutter of a sash ribbon, a disordered curl, or a loosened shoe-lace, had often unfettered his muse.

He remained in Paris some time and met many interesting strangers. Our minister made him a member of his legation, which position, though nominal to Willis, opened many a stately door barred to the ordinary traveler. He visited the great cities of Italy, was everywhere admitted to the best society, where he pleased all he met by his fine bearing and ready speech. In Florence he met Landor, and Greenough, our own sculptor, who moulded a bust of him which, years later, he copied in marble. It is

interesting to know that of the block of marble from which this bust was cut, a piece was left large enough for the statue of a little American girl whom, years after, Willis married as his second wife.

Through the kindness of some friends, Willis was enabled to make a tour of the Mediterranean, continuing it to Greece, Constantinople and Smyrna. Byron's "Childe Harold" was fresh in the mind of everyone and it was a great delight to our writer to follow in his footsteps. The letters from Constantinople were the best of all his "Pencilings," probably from the fact that the shops, the harems, the veiled women, piqued his curiosity just enough to set him writing at his best. After remaining a time in Malta, he went to England by way of Switzerland and France. When he touched Britian he felt the home feeling that comes over one on again treading his native soil. Though he found ready access to select circles on the Continent, his real and greatest social conquests were made in England and Scotland. He came armed with letters from noted people among whom he had sojourned and he met the great writers and statesmen of the day on an equal footing, though all the time earning his meagre ten dollars per week. Many noble houses in both countries were hospitably opened to him, where he received due attention as the equal

of Irving and Cooper, also American favorites abroad. How he accomplished this was a matter of sport to him, as to us, as we count his slender means and his limited genius. That he made a stir in London was a matter of no little pride to him, a feeling which he often betrayed in his letters home. He wrote his mother of the startling contrasts of his life—one day dining with princes in their palaces, the next enjoying a shilling repast in some quiet coffee house—apparently having a fortune behind him, in reality frequently reduced to half a crown or less. A poem, however, or a tale or an interesting letter luckily extended his collapsed purse and our “natty” representative was again on his feet.

Meanwhile he kept up his weekly letters to *The Mirror*. They were still read with the old interest and many were the readers who owed to them their notions of Europe. The most famous of these was Bayard Taylor, then a hard working youth, and since, our most famous traveler. It is interesting to know that, not only at a distance did Willis inspire this young man, but when he set out for Germany for travel and study, it was Willis who helped him by funds and important letters of introduction. Henceforth the two were close friends. This is but a single instance of our writer's kindness to young and aspiring authors.

After four and a half years abroad, in which he had written more than a hundred and thirty letters and published three volumes of sketches and stories, Willis sailed for home with a somewhat regretful heart. With him came his wife, Mary Stace, an Englishwoman of great beauty and sweet disposition. She was the daughter of General Stace of the English army and had been married to Willis only a short time when they sailed for America. With his young wife he settled in a beautiful nook in the vicinity of Oswego, where he bought two hundred acres from an old schoolmate, naming it Glenmary in honor of his wife. Here he enjoyed to the utmost the delights of a refined and happy home and the exquisite scenery for which the section was noted. From here he wrote "Letters from under a Bridge," so delightfully characterized by Lowell. The bridge reminds us of Pope's Grotto, so daintily was it fashioned and so proud was its owner of it and the little brook it spanned.

Soon after his return to America, Willis began writing plays, a line in which he had no talent and of which he made an utter failure. His disappointments in this and other directions made it necessary to put Glenmary up for sale at a great sacrifice to the owner, as his letter to the unknown purchaser shows:—

"I thought to have shuffled off my mortal coil tran-

quilly here, flitting at last in some company of my autumn leaves, or some bevy of spring blossoms, or snow in the thaw. . . . In the shady depths of the small glen above you, among the wild flowers and music, the music of the brook babbling over the rocky steps, is a spot sacred to love and memory. Keep it inviolate, and as much of the happiness of Glenmary as we can leave behind stay with you for recompense!"

The spot referred to was the grave of his infant child, which Willis had been compelled to dig himself in the frozen hillside.

After a happy residence of about five years, he and his family, his wife and daughter Imogen, took lodgings in New York. *The Mirror* had failed and another paper had taken its place, on which Willis worked. In the midst of business anxieties his wife died and his own health became impaired. He made a flying trip to Europe, with his daughter, but ill health prevented him from accomplishing much that he hoped.

On his return, he became national correspondent for two New York papers, one of which, *The National Press*, was changed in 1846 to *The Home Journal*, the paper conducted by Morris and Willis until the death of both. It was a leading society paper and the most successful venture of these two men in journalism.

We cannot but regret that Willis should have been willing to use for the trivial purpose of describing fashionable parties, balls and dresses, his genius, which to say the least, was uncommon. But he was somewhat justified, for he had to live, and men liked and paid for this kind of journalism when the more lofty sort was often left without remuneration.

While in Washington, he became acquainted with Cornelia Grinnell, whom he married about eighteen months after the death of his first wife. She was twenty years younger than her husband, a woman of beauty, and of the strength of character which very materially helped her husband in his trying last years.

As his fortunes began to rise, Willis again longed for the country. The Highlands of the Hudson had attracted both himself and his wife, and so he purchased fifty acres four miles from Newbury. The tract was a sort of ravine, seemingly almost incapable of cultivation, but Willis saw in it possibilities to which its former owner was blind, as he tossed his head and remarked in a careless way in answer to the question of its value : "That, Sir, is an idle, wild sort of a place on which nothing will grow." Willis was not daunted, however, and bought it, built a picturesque cottage, cultivated the grounds and made it one

of the most delightful villas on that most beautiful of American rivers. In deciding upon a name he recalled the conversation noted above and called it *Idlewild*, a name as familiar among famous American homes as that of that other charming home on the Hudson, *Sunnyside*. This place he owned until his death, though I am sorry to say in the press of business marking his last years he frequently absented himself for weeks at a time in the hope of accomplishing more in the crowded city.

Here, in this home by the running water and in the midst of green fields, he entertained many famous guests—artists and literary men; here he lovingly tended his grounds and reveled with his children and their pets, of which he was as fond as they were. One of these, a dog named Cæsar, that had accompanied Dr. Kane on his Arctic expedition, is buried in the yard with a monument as imposing as that of Scott's Maida at Abbotsford, or of Byron's Boatswain at Newstead. It is too bad that our poet had to be called from such congenial employments to the drudgery of his journal, but such seemed to be his mission, and when the Rebellion broke out he was one of the many who rushed to Washington to become *war correspondents*.

For fifteen years previous to his death he had been

ailing, and it was early discovered that his brain was affected by an incurable disease, to which he gradually but heroically succumbed. For a long time, his real condition was kept a secret for fear a public knowledge of it would injure his business. The fortitude with which he withstood the frequent violent attacks of the disease was a surprise to his best friends, who did not before realize what stern stuff the man was made of. He continued his labors until he would fall in the streets from sheer exhaustion, and then they carried him back to Idlewild to die. His death occurred on his birthday, January 20, 1867. He was taken to Boston and buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery, whither he was borne by his illustrious contemporaries, Longfellow, Holmes, Dana, Lowell, Fields and others. Thus, on a gloomy, over-clouded, winter's day, was a great man laid to rest, where others, some greater, but many his inferiors, have since been gathered. Just a step away is the grave of his sister, "Fanny Fern," with whom, let us hope, there has come an eternal reconciliation, denied them on earth.

As we recall the deep spirit of his poetry, the sweetness of his home-life, his beautiful face and kingly bearing, many must feel with Thackeray, "It is comfortable that there should have been a Willis."

QUESTIONS ON WILLIS.

- Where was Willis born?
 With what literary group would you class him?
 Tell what you can of his parents.
 How did their religious views affect the life of their son?
 What work did his father do for journalism?
 At what schools was Willis educated?
 Why were these chosen?
 Tell all you can of his college career.
 Describe the city of New Haven at the time Willis was attending college.
 What work did Willis do for *Peter Parley*?
 Who was *Peter Parley*?
 What were some of the things that made Willis dislike Boston?
 Who was *Fanny Fern*? What do you know of her relations with Willis?
 Describe "Pencilings by the Way."
 How were these papers received?
 Tell all you can of the career of Willis while abroad?
 What famous traveler did Willis encourage and help?
 Describe "Letters from under a Bridge."
 What was Glenmary and why was it given up?
 Who was the partner of Willis in editing *The Home Journal*?
 What poem of his is well known?
 Describe Idlewild fully and tell all you can of the life of Willis there.
 Name some of his poems founded on the Scriptures.

SUBJECTS FOR LANGUAGE WORK.

1. The Trials of Journalism.
2. Willis at Idlewild.
3. Famous Homes of the Hudson.
4. Willis in England.
5. The Scripture Poems of Willis.
6. Willis in New Haven.

OUTLINE ON WILLIS.

- I. Birth at Portland, Maine, January 20, 1806.
 1. Descent from strict Puritans.
 2. One of nine children.
- II. Youth.
 1. Early showed aptitude for study.
 2. Prepared for Yale at Phillips Academy at Andover.
 3. Entered Yale College.
 - a. An apt but not a deep student.
 - b. Not a favorite in the College but greatly sought by the towns-people.
- III. Manhood.
 1. Edits "Token" for *Peter Parley* for 1829.
 2. Starts a Magazine of his own.

Fails through lack of support.
 3. Leaves Boston for New York, embittered by
 - a. Failure of Magazine.
 - b. Dismissal from his church.
 - c. Loss of his sweetheart.
 4. In company with George P. Morris edits *The New York Mirror*.
 5. "Pencilings by the Way."
 - a. Sketches of local travels at first.
 - b. Willis was sent abroad to continue these sketches on a broader basis.
 6. Four years in Europe.
 - a. Reveled in the society of Rome, Paris and London — entertained by the best.
 - b. Letters written were more *social* than political.
 - c. Married to an English woman.
 7. Return to America and settlement at Glenmary near Oswego.
 - a. "Letters from under a Bridge."
 - b. Financial troubles led to sale of Glenmary.
 8. Removal to New York.
 - a. Death of wife.
 - b. Editor with Morris of *Home Journal*, a society paper.

9. War correspondent at Washington.
 - a. Marriage to Cornelia Grinnell.
 - b. Failing health hindered his progress.
 10. Purchase of *Idlewild* on the Hudson.
 - a. A perfect home — Willis among his children and their pets.
 - b. Health constantly declining.
- IV. Death at *Idlewild*, January 20, 1867.
Burial in Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge,
Mass.



POE.

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

"Two natures in him strove,
Like day with night, his sunshine and his gloom."

In our study of American writers it has so far been a notable feature of the work that the lives of the authors have been singularly free from the irregularities which have marked the lives of many of England's brightest literary men. So far we have had to record only the tranquil lives of men whose public and private careers, almost to an individual, may be taken as models for the young. These men have been clustered about Boston and New York, and have numbered on their rolls of friendship the greatest and best of the age.

It is a painful duty, now, to break this white record by telling the life-story of one whose poetic genius was of the highest order, but whose life was one long pain, caused by a weak will and a stubborn, untrained heart; one whose friends were few and mostly of an humble sort. We turn from the cool, level Yankees of New England, to one whose temperament had the warmth, the glow, the passion of his

own south-land, a character at once lovable and contemptible, one whose fine genius so sinks into the heart that our worst condemnation is tears of pity for the spirit whose wings are trailed in the dust and mire of irresolution. By his beautiful face and by his dissolute life we instinctively place Poe beside Byron; by the music and ideality of his verse, as well as by the fact that he left an incomplete life-work, he must ever remind us of that fine spirit among English poets, Percy Bysshe Shelley. At all events, he is a figure we could not afford to lose from our literature — a poet of no school of composition save that school universal whose soul is genius.

The biographers of Poe have been numerous. In the hands of some he has suffered gross injustice, and by others he has been idealized almost beyond recognition. Griswold did the former service for him in perhaps the most contemptible way that ever one literary man wrote up another. His work is a stigma on both men; on the writer that he would ever dare be so false to a dead man, and on Poe that his life should suggest to any man so base a libel. There are others that are quite as misleading, owing to a desire to cover up the faults of Poe's life. That there should be such widely differing biographies is proof positive that many points in Poe's life are obscure, a remark-

able fact in that his life of forty years was included in the first half of our present century, co-incident with the early lives of Holmes and Whittier. Such obscurity does exist, the place and date of his birth even being matters of doubt.

That this sketch may lean neither to the one side nor to the other, but rather strike a perfect medium between the two is the desire of its humble writer, however far short it may fall of so lofty an aim.

The family of Edgar Allan Poe was of Norman-French origin, the original name being Le Poer. After the Conquest this family established itself in Ireland. The earliest member of the family in this country was John Poe, who emigrated from Ireland about one hundred and fifty years ago. It was the son of this man, David Poe, who made a record for himself in our Revolution and who became the close friend and confidant of General Lafayette. Of David Poe's five children only two lived to grow up, David, the father of Edgar, and Maria, the mother of Virginia Clemm, afterwards the child-wife of Poe. Little is known of the father of the poet, except that at the age of eighteen, while studying law in Baltimore, he fell in love with Elizabeth Arnold, a beautiful actress of some ability and a woman several years his senior.

With this woman he contracted a runaway marriage, and began playing with her on the stage. For this business he was totally unfitted, so that his efforts ended in utter failure. Three children were born of this marriage, two sons and a daughter, of whom Edgar was the second. During our War of 1812 both parents died of consumption and within a few weeks of each other, leaving their three children in absolute want. May we not, right here, find some excuse for the beautiful boy who never knew the delights of a childhood home, but who shared instead the wandering and precarious life of an actor in the early years of this century?

Whether Edgar was born in Boston or Baltimore, in 1809 or 1811, will always be a question. The weight of evidence, however, seems to be on the side of the former place and date, and so let it stand. With these facts in doubt it is little to be wondered at that almost nothing is known of his childhood during the life of his parents. At the death of their father and mother these three children were adopted by different persons. Henry Poe, the eldest, was educated by his uncle living in Baltimore. He was a wild youth, but like his younger brother, gifted in the art of poetry, as certain verses which he secretly wrote show. Edgar was adopted by Mr. John Allan, a wealthy

Scotch merchant of Richmond. This change, from the extreme poverty and wandering life of a playwright's child to the elegance of Mr. Allan's home, was very great, and Edgar, though young, was able to appreciate it.

He at once became the petted child and heir prospective of the rich merchant, who, though generous to a fault to his adopted boy, failed to sympathize with the spirit of genius which the child already began to show. He needed more sympathy, more curbing, and less money than was given to him at this time. While Mr. Allan furnished abundant resources, Mrs. Allan lavished a wealth of affection hardly less than she could have bestowed upon an own child. Perhaps, had this good angel lived, things might have been different with Poe; but she died and left him in the home of his benefactor without the affection which his warm nature demanded.

Shortly after his adoption, he was taken by Mr. and Mrs. Allan to England and there put to school for five years near London. The school-master, the school-house, the yard with its high wall finished with those terrible bits of broken glass embedded in the mortar, the monotonous walks under the surly eye of a teacher, all lingered with Poe, for he vividly recalls them in "William Wilson," one of his prose sketches. What

was more important, was his recollections of the old abbeys and castles of Great Britain. In his poems and tales, weird and haunted, as most of them are, such recollections found apt setting.

About 1822, the family returned to America, and the instruction, so well begun in England, was continued for a time under the best private teachers, preparatory to entering the University of Virginia.

During these early years the beauty and vigorous intellect of the boy were remarked by all with whom he came in contact. They especially delighted Mr. and Mrs. Allan, who were fond of displaying his powers of memory and recitation, in both of which he was a prodigy. Many a time he entertained a drawing-room full of people by reciting the best selections from the English poets.

In school he showed a strong passion for classic poetry, but was averse to mathematics. There is a story that at the age of ten years he had a manuscript volume of poems which he wished published, but, when Mr. Allan consulted one of the boy's teachers, he was discouraged, in that so much publicity would be bad for a boy of Edgar's age and excitability. Whether this is true or not, we cannot tell, but we do know that a little poem, "Lines to Helen," was written when he was very young, and that Lowell, a

great critic, pronounces it the finest juvenile poem he has ever read.

As the boy developed into a man his beauty and genius grew in proportion, and it is not remarkable that he graced, with his courtly manners and deference to women, the drawing-rooms of the best society of Richmond, than which none more polished has ever gathered in one of our cities. We can see him now in all the freshness of youth, his dark eyes filled with a light that was deeper than that which shone on the gaiety about him — there was yet left that subtle, far-away look which was to pierce so daringly into unknown lands of spirit and ghost and ghoul; that was to see so tragically the shadow from that bird of evil omen, cast over him, never more, alas, to be lifted! And yet from out those soul-speaking eyes how slight the sign of the tragedy of his life!

In 1826 he entered the University of Virginia, which then was quite new, but the favorite resort of young men of wealth from many southern states. Here it was that he contracted the habit of drinking, a misfortune which all his success as a student could not counterbalance. In a year he was expelled, his habits of gaming and drinking having deeply involved him in debt, some of which Mr. Allan refused to pay. A rupture between the two followed, and Poe left his home in anger.

Bereft of his income, he cast about for something to do. Not trained to the sobriety of any regular calling, it is not surprising that adventure should attract him. The revolution going on in Greece, to which cause Byron gave his money and his life, attracted Poe. He crossed the ocean and we next hear of him, not in Greece, assisting the cause of freedom, but in some sort of difficulty with the authorities of St. Petersburg, owing to which he narrowly escaped Siberia. Returning home, there was a temporary reconciliation with Mr. Allan, and the question of choosing a profession was laid before the young man. The military was selected, and his guardian at once set about securing an appointment to West Point for the young aspirant. This was not difficult to procure and Poe entered upon his new duties as if he were thoroughly in earnest; but alas for his weak will! He soon began to neglect all orders and duties, falling into his old habits again, so that in less than a year he was brought before a court-martial and "dismissed from the service of the United States." Again he returned to Richmond to a justly indignant guardian—a badly edited little volume of poems and the disgrace of a dismissal from West Point being all he had to show to a man who had forgiven and forgotten the faults of his erring ward.

The home in Richmond was not what it had been; the first Mrs. Allan had died and in her stead there was a younger wife and one or two children. There were several reasons why these facts were unpleasant to the "cashiered cadet"; the love and condoning power of the first Mrs. Allan was a sore loss to Edgar in trying to repair the rupture between Mr. Allan and himself; and these children—were they not the rightful heirs to the wealth which Poe had been brought up to look upon as sure to be his sometime? And so harsh words were spoken—some say Poe criticized his guardian's marriage—and the young man left his home never again to return to it. Mr. Allan never could be induced to give Poe any help either during his lifetime or at his death.

Poe was now thrown upon his own resources, and they were poor indeed, for, though backed by a matchless intellect, they were imperilled by a feeble will. The record of the years here is very obscure; it tells no intelligible part of the story of his life, and so must be passed over.

Along in 1833 we get the next definite glimpse of Poe. A Baltimore paper, *The Saturday Visitor*, to encourage writers of America, offered two prizes, one for the best prose tale and one for the best poem. Poe submitted a poem and several of his prose

sketches. The committee, attracted by his elegant penmanship, began to read the sketches and were at once interested. They chose "The Manuscript Found in a Bottle," and gave Poe the prize, one hundred dollars. The poem submitted was "The Coliseum." It was superior to the others sent in, but it was deemed wiser to bestow the second prize on some one else, in that Poe had already gained the first. One member of this committee was John P. Kennedy, author of "Horse Shoe Robinson." When Poe presented himself to get his money, Kennedy was moved by his apparent poverty and became at once a true friend to the poet. His shoes were ragged and a shabby coat hid the absence of a shirt, so a very acceptable service was done him when his newly made friend took him to a clothier, and had him fitted out in a new suit complete. More than this, he recommended him to Mr. White, the editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, who gave him employment on his paper. Kennedy introduced him as "a very imaginative young fellow, a little given to the terrific."

After leaving the home of Mr. Allan, Poe sought his aunt, Maria Clemm, then residing in Baltimore. She was a widow, and was supporting herself and only child by teaching. Her daughter Virginia was then a beautiful child about seven years of age, and

Poe became at once deeply interested in her. He directed her studies, a great pleasure in those dark days when his fortunes seemed so low. This aunt, who later on became his mother-in-law, was through life his best friend, and after his death his strong defender. She was, indeed, a mother unto her "dear Eddie," as she always called him, and it was appropriate that after eighty years of life she should be buried beside him for whom she lived so many years.

At this time his reading was extensive — Campbell was his favorite among poets, as was Disraeli among novelists. He was fond of Mrs. Browning's poetry and one of the earliest to appreciate the beauties of Tennyson. He seemed to revel in metaphysics, as his stories constantly prove. Besides his reading he wrote much, producing rapidly his best tales and many of his minor poems.

The most prosperous time in Poe's life was now approaching. From being merely a monthly contributor to the *Messenger*, he became first assistant and then editor-in-chief of this most famous of southern literary periodicals. His pay was encouraging, though small indeed compared with what is thought right for similar service now. In a short time he had established a reputation as the writer of stories perfectly unique in our literature, savoring

strongly of the legends of the Rhine ; as a poet whose art was inimitable, and as a keen and merciless critic. With so much of prosperity attending him, he now persuaded Mrs. Clemm to allow him to marry Virginia. Though she was a mere child, the mother finally consented, and in real life we have here a "child wife" more ideal, more exquisite, than even the imagination of a Dickens could create for his favorite of books — "David Copperfield."

She verified Poe's theory that a beautiful woman is the most beautiful thing in life, and, in later years, alas ! that other theory of his, that the saddest thing in life is when she dies. She was his "lost Lenore," his "Annabel Lee," his "Ligeia," his "rare and radiant one," whom even the angels envied, and to her he was devoted and true — the one unblemished spot in his life.

On her part, she worshipped her handsome and gifted husband, and listened quietly as he discoursed on the beauties and power of literary art.

Mrs. Clemm always lived with them — her children — and managed the household, at times most slenderly provided for. She it was who often wandered from publisher to publisher with a tale or poem, pleading that it be accepted, for he was ill, very ill, and needed the money. What his illness was never passed her

patient lips, though the initiated knew that too often it was the sickness that follows a fit of hard drinking. This habit lost him his place on the *Messenger*, though he never ceased to be interested in the periodical which had served him so well.

The little household then flitted to New York, to Philadelphia, and again to New York. During his first residence in New York he was engaged on the *Quarterly Review*, which he soon quitted to become editor of *Graham's Magazine*, published in Philadelphia. He was cheered by a cozy little home while in this city, but all could not prevent him from being entrapped by his old sin, and we find him in straits so close that he wrote Dr. Griswold, "Can you not send me five dollars? I am sick, and Virginia is almost gone."

Back again to New York he went and was engaged on the *Mirror*, the paper in which N. P. Willis was interested. Willis gives us a sketch of Poe at this time, which shows that in spite of his drinking he impressed men with his power, and was a character not to be despised :

"With his pale, beautiful, and intellectual face as a reminder of what genius was in him, it was impossible, of course, not to treat him always with deferential courtesy; and to our occasional request that he

would not probe too deep in a criticism, or that he would erase a passage colored too highly with his resentments against society and mankind, he readily and courteously assented, far more yielding than most men, we thought, on points so excusably sensitive. With a prospect of taking the lead in another periodical, he at last voluntarily gave up his employment with us."

During these years Poe's best tales had been collected into a volume which he pleased to call "Tales of the Arabesque and Grotesque." There is an element in these stories nowhere else to be found in our literature, unless we make a partial exception in favor of Hawthorne. Many of them lie entirely within that unknown circle between life and death, the contemplation of which tends to madness, hence the weird horror of many of these prose poems, as they are properly called. In a number of these stories the reasoning power of the writer is so marvellously used that they rank the greatest of their kind — tales of ratiocination. Such are "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," and "The Purloined Letter." The peculiarity of these stories attracted the attention of the French, in whose country they became very popular through anonymous translations. They were attributed to one French writer and another, until a law

suit between two conflicting claimants revealed the fact that neither one wrote them, but that they were the work of a young writer in America, Edgar Allan Poe by name. This at once gave great popularity to everything Poe had written.

In 1846, owing to the rapidly declining health of his wife, Poe took a cottage at Fordham, a few miles from the city, in order to avoid the heat of summer in the crowded metropolis. The cottage was small—only four rooms—romantically situated on a little hill.

The house was surrounded by fruit trees, and there was a flower garden, too, to delight the poet and his wife, so like a delicate flower herself, so soon to wither and be no more. The house was furnished simply, but in harmony with a poet's taste. To this secluded home Mrs. Osgood and Miss Lynch often bent their steps, and they felt rewarded for any trouble it may have cost, by the home-picture they found. These friendly visits were bright episodes in a life about which the shades were so rapidly gathering, for the young wife was failing fast, and the poet himself was frequently very ill. He wandered about the lovely spot that was his home alone now. What wonder that the visions that came to him were sadder than the saddest thing we know, so that their echo haunts us long after we have read the written words.

In spite of the kindness of friends and the toil of the poet so poorly paid, the little household at Fordham was often in sore want. The most pathetic thing in the poet's life is the death of his beloved wife in one of these intervals of want. Shivering with cold,



POE'S COTTAGE AT FORDHAM.

she, his idol, lay wrapped in his great coat, hugging to her bosom a tortoise-shell cat in the vain effort to warm herself; and he sick and too poor to procure sufficient clothing for her bed, or a little wine to prolong the life he fain would have extended. And so

she died, leaving him stupefied by a grief from which he hardly rallied for a year, and from which he never wholly recovered.

The year before Poe moved to Fordham, his masterpiece, "The Raven," was published. Ten dollars was all he received for it. "Among poems," says one writer, "it stands alone as does the Venus of Milo among statues." And so it does if we consider the perfection of its structure, of its music, its language of almost superhuman expression, and its purpose so direct, so consummately accomplished. It stands the embodiment of its author's theory of poetry, without a touch of imitation, unless it be that the repetition so marvellously used here was suggested by the author's study of Mrs. Browning. As a work of poetic art it stands without a parallel, an enduring monument to the greatness of its author's mind. Those of us who have grown used to seeing it in our readers, let us read it again, in a new light, and with new thoughts in our minds.

Let us take up "The Bells" in the same spirit and see if ever human language before or since did such marvellous work of expression.

He loved beautiful words, and if they did not exist he coined them. Listen to these: *Lenore*, *Ligeia*, *scintillant*, *albatross*, *Auber*, *halcyon*, *Yaanek*,

and so on throughout his poems. *Nevermore*, in his hands, became an unending tale of sadness.

If you care less for art and more for poetry, turn to "Annabel Lee," or to that weird poem of a dethroned reason, "The Haunted House," or to "The City by the Sea."

If you wish to see the aspirations of a poet read "Israfel," that "angel whose heart-strings are a lute."

" If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky."

In such a poem poets and kindred souls must ever delight.

In the summer of 1849, Poe left Fordham for Virginia. His friends helped to establish him in Richmond. He seemed to relinquish his old habits and be on the high road to better times. He had renewed his acquaintance with a good woman he had loved in youth, now a widow, and was about to marry her. In October he started North to attend to some literary business in Philadelphia and to bring Mrs. Clemm to the wedding. The few days that followed are full of obscurity, but it is known that he

fell in with old companions in Baltimore, that delirium took possession of him, that he was painfully misused by some rough fellows interested in the election then going forward in the city, that he was found by some friends in a state of delirium in the back end of one of the election headquarters and taken to a hospital, where he was tenderly cared for. On Oct. 7th he roused from unconsciousness and asked, "Where am I?" "Among your best friends," was the answer. After hesitating a few moments, he said, "My best friend would be the man who would blow my brains out," and in ten minutes he was dead. His own terrible lines come involuntarily into one's mind as he thinks of this wretched ending to a life tragedy.

" Out — out are the lights — out all!
And over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm,
That the play is the Tragedy, 'Man,'
And its hero the Conqueror, Worm."

He was buried in the churchyard of Westminster Church by the side of his grandfather Poe, only three persons attending the funeral.

QUESTIONS ON POE.

Who was a favorable early biographer of Poe?

Who an unfavorable biographer?

What were some of the influences unfavorable to the development of a strong manhood in Poe?

What criticism have you to offer on Mr. Allan's dealings with Poe?

Who was Virginia Clemm?

What can you say of her mother and her relation to Poe's life?

What were some of Poe's favorite books?

What things account for his life-long poverty?

Name several leading newspapers with which Poe was associated at various times.

How is Fordham connected with Poe's life?

Where is Poe buried?

Name some of Poe's Tales.

What is meant by ratiocination?

What tales of Poe's especially illustrate this feature?

What poem of Poe's is noted for its perfect mechanism?

What incident led to the writing of "The Bells"?

What was the greatest fault of Poe's life? Of his works? The greatest excellence of his works?

ESSAY SUBJECTS.

The Southern Spirit in American Literature.

The Mechanism of "The Raven."

Poe's Love of the Horrible.

A Real Child Wife.

Poe and His Biographers.

Poe as a Critic.

OUTLINE FOR EDGAR ALLAN POE.

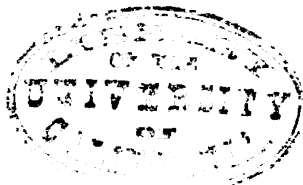
- I. Poe's life as compared with that of other literary Americans. Men of similar tendencies among English writers.

II. Life.

1. Parents actors, unwisely matched and in poor circumstances.
2. Birth at Boston (probably) in 1809. One of three children.
3. Early death of both parents.
4. Adoption by John Allan, a rich merchant of Richmond.
5. Education.
 - a. Five years in London, England.
 - b. Private instruction at home.
 - c. Short career in University of Virginia, where he was a brilliant student, dissipated, and finally expelled.
 - d. Appointed to West Point, and "cashiered" in less than a year.
6. Final rupture with Mr. Allan.
7. Marriage to Virginia Clemm.
8. Migratory literary work in New York and Philadelphia.
9. Death and burial in Baltimore, in 1849.

III. Works.

1. Prose.
 - a. Tales, abounding in ratiocination and weird horror.
 - b. Criticisms, searching, scathing, and often unjust.
2. Poetry. Short, finished, sad productions. Most noted poems — "The Raven," "The Bells," "Israfel," "The Haunted Palace," "Annabel Lee."





BAYARD TAYLOR.

BAYARD TAYLOR.

“The gentle pilgrim troubadour,
Whose songs have girdled half the earth;
Whose pages, like the magic mat
Whereon the eastern lover sat,
Have borne us over Rhine land’s purple vines,
And Nubia’s tawny sands, and Phrygia’s mountain pines.”
— Whittier’s “*Last Walk in Autumn.*”

If there is one characteristic which Americans may justly claim, it is that of being the greatest travelers on the face of the earth. Unrest seems such an intimate part of American character that only in travel and exploration can our countrymen find satisfaction. Consequently we have among our notable men many famous travelers, men who have braved the scorching suns of tropic climes, and the frigid cold of the Arctic regions, in their desire to establish truth and enlarge its boundaries. In the list of Americans who have thus distinguished themselves, there is none whose name so involuntarily and affectionately springs to our lips, as that of Bayard Taylor. There are several reasons for this, not the least of which is the artistic way in which he has recorded his wanderings

both in poetry and in prose. The personality and genius, too, of the man, must be potent influences in attaching us to him, for while he was a great author, versatile even beyond the average man of genius, he was also a strong, true friend, a dutiful and loving son, a conscientious and patriotic citizen, and a family man, devoted to wife and child. There is also in his life an element of pathos, which draws us to him—the pathos that comes from a life nobly planned and yet, from lack of physical strength and control over certain untoward circumstances, ends untimely with much of the plan unfulfilled, and an insatiable desire to have *the "stuff of life"* prolonged for more work yet. Such was the life of Bayard Taylor, our poet, essayist, traveler, lecturer, translator.

Kennett Square is a village of Chester County, Pennsylvania, about thirty miles from Philadelphia. No one can visit the section without being impressed by the beauty of the scenery, and the thrift of the inhabitants, most of them farmers tilling the land sold to their ancestors by William Penn. The products and genial climate indicate a country on the boundaries, as it were, between North and South, where summer lingers, and winter hastens to more favorable latitudes. These lines of Whittier well describe the charms of the country :

- “Again before me with your names, fair Chester’s landscape comes,
Its meadows, woods, and ample barns, and quaint stone-builed homes,
The smooth shorn vales, the wheaten slopes, the boscage green and soft,
• Of which their poet sings so well from towered Cedarcroft.”

On a farm in this vicinity Bayard Taylor was born, Jan. 11, 1825, the year the first railroad was completed, so he was fond of saying that he was just as old as the railroad. His parents were of Quaker and German descent, and while they did not adhere strictly to the *regime* of the Society of Friends, they believed in and practiced its principles in every day life. Our writer very easily falls into the plain language of the Quakers when addressing old friends and school-mates.

Bayard Taylor never tried to trace his origin beyond a certain Robert Taylor, who came to this country with William Penn, though he says, “If I should discover that Jeremy Taylor sprang from the same stock, I should be prouder of him than of a possible descent from Tudor or Plantagenet.” He was fourth of a large family, the older members of which had died in infancy. To his mother, especially, he owed much, and to her he wrote some of his best letters. Both parents outlived their famous son, after sharing with him every grain of prosperity he ever attained.

Bayard was averse to farm work. The grime on his hands was distasteful to him, though he could wade by the hour in a muddy swamp near by, catching bugs and baby frogs. Understanding his disposition, his mother shielded him as much as possible from the unpleasant work, and he was often given odd jobs about the house to do instead. He early became very fond of reading, and a story is told of how, when left to rock the baby, he became so absorbed in his reading, that he rocked himself merely, while the crying of the child brought the mother to its relief. That he was to be a traveler was dimly foreshadowed in these early years by his delight in all sorts of imaginary trips, and by an almost insane desire to widen his horizon by climbing. He spoke of London, and of Paris, with the supreme confidence that he should some day see them.

His fondness for books increased, and by the time he was twelve years old he had exhausted the village library. He had read Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, and had dipped into poetry, where Shelley and Keats were always master spirits to him.

Though his parents were not able to send him to college, his education, up to the age of sixteen, was the best the country schools at the time afforded. He attended the Academy at West Chester for a time, and

again the one at Unionville, but neither school gave all that he wanted, and what his general advancement demanded. At the age of seventeen, his education in the schools had been completed. His was more than a fair education, for he was well started in Latin, French and Spanish; his reading had given him command of general history; and a constant practice of writing poetry, stories, and essays since he was twelve years old, gave him an enviable facility with the pen. He was proficient also in drawing, in which he had shown so much taste and talent, that for a time he thought of going to the city to learn engraving. This love of art remained with him through life, and one of his dreams in the days of struggle was that some day he might have leisure to improve himself in the art of painting. His, however, was the noble destiny to paint in colors that Time should not fade or crack.

Another tie, too, had been formed in the early years. A playmate and schoolmate, the daughter of a neighbor, had long been to him more than other girls, and this affection became one of the strongest influences of his life. The young woman, Mary Agnew, returned his love, and after some delay in gaining her parents' consent, they became engaged to be married, when the young man's fortunes should warrant such a step.

In casting about for a permanent business, the young man decided upon printing, as more likely to lead up to the more congenial occupation of journalism. He therefore apprenticed himself to a printer in W. Chester.

Meanwhile, he kept up his reading. Inspired especially by Willis's "Pencilings by the Way," he decided, in company with his cousin, to make a tour of Europe on foot. His only resources were the letters of travel he hoped to be able to write, so he went to New York, and armed with kind letters from Willis, made a tour of the newspaper offices, in hopes to get some one to publish his letters. He met with many rebuffs. Greeley of the *Tribune*, after telling him to wait until he knew something before writing his letters, paid him fifty dollars for twelve of them. This, with other similar offers, gave him possession of about one hundred and fifty dollars, and with this slender sum, he and his companion took steerage passage for the Old World. After a month's sea voyage, they landed at Liverpool, and began a two years' tramp through Britain and the western and central countries of the Continent. The privations through which our travelers passed were very great, a fact which can be realized when we find that in the two years he spent less than five hundred dollars, and this sum he earned by his letters sent home.

At times he was reduced to a shilling, and once, while in London, he was on the point of going to work in a printing office, when a loan of five dollars tided him over to a more prosperous condition.

Such were the wanderings which gave rise to "Views Afoot," a book which, notwithstanding some faults, will long remain to most readers the favorite among his books of travel. He had wandered almost friendless through Europe, but when he returned home, he found that his letters had made him known throughout his own country.

After a year's experience in editing a country newspaper, which left him with debts which it took three years to cancel, he began regular work on the *New York Tribune*, which work continued with some slight interruptions until his death.

A trip to California was his first regular work on the paper. Gold had just been discovered and everyone was excited. Here there was a field for the pleasing letters which Bayard Taylor could write, and so he went, living most of the time out of doors, and enjoying intensely the novel experiences. Here, again, was material for another pleasing book of travel, "Eldorado." He also recorded his impressions in a series of poems, which were very widely read at the time, and are still among the good things he wrote.

Success was crowning his efforts, but the event with which he hoped even to crown success was cruelly postponed, for the woman of his choice was stricken with consumption and though they both hoped for the best for a time, it soon became certain that death must sever these two faithful hearts, and they waited patiently for the end. The dying woman was married to Taylor less than two months before her death, which occurred Dec. 21, 1850, leaving him disheartened and broken in health.

It is no wonder that in his shattered mental and physical condition his thought turned toward travel as a recuperative employment. Again he crossed the Atlantic, this time not an unknown lad, but a successful author of prose and poetry, and the representative of a great newspaper. He now aspired to leave the beaten track of travel and see Greece and the East — thus to fulfil dreams of his boyhood which had then seemed to him immortal visions.

After spending some time in London to renew old acquaintances and make new ones, he left for Vienna, where he parted from his brother, who had thus far accompanied him. He then struck out for Alexandria, intending to spend the winter in Egypt. After a most interesting experience, in which he traversed the whole of Egypt and went far toward the centre of Africa,

he spent the summer in Asia Minor. The drowsiness, however, of this latter country, made him long for the life of home, and so he started on his return. On reaching Constantinople he found communications from the *Tribune* awaiting him, to the effect that he should join Commodore Perry in his expedition to Japan. It was necessary, however, for Taylor to make a journey overland to Hong Kong, where he could join Perry. Meanwhile time enough remained to meet his brother in Florence, and pay a visit to his German friend, Bulfeb, who lived in Gotha, and between whom and Taylor an intimate friendship had arisen while they shared the joys and hardships of Egyptian travel. It is worth while to emphasize this first visit to Gotha, for this place became in later years a second home to Bayard Taylor. Here it was he met the woman who became his second wife — Marie Hansen, the daughter of a famous German astronomer and a woman of refinement.

After a few excursions into the interesting country about Gotha, Taylor set out to meet Perry. Three weeks were spent in Spain and then began the long overland journey to China. It was accomplished in very short time, so that for much that he saw there was time merely to catch impressions. What he wrote, however, of India and her cities and fantastic

architecture remains the best description we have of that distant region. Bayard Taylor has always claimed an Oriental vein in his nature and the claim must be allowed when we read his "Poems of the Orient," and realize his enjoyment of the scenes through which he passed. Byron alone has excelled him in reproducing this Oriental tone in poetry.

For more than six months he had received no news from home, and when a great packet of letters which had accumulated were handed him at Foo Choo, they were welcome indeed to this wandering home-lover. Among others were letters from his mother, from Baker, Fields and Stoddard. The news which especially delighted him came from his mother, who wrote that his father had purchased for him eighty acres of land adjoining the old homestead, an old farm toward which Bayard had always looked longingly as a place capable of great beauty in the hands of some one who had the means for its proper cultivation. This tract was afterwards called Cedarcroft, and here arose that stately country seat where our traveler fondly but vainly, alas! hoped to rest from his labors, and find leisure to paint pictures and write the poetry of which his soul was always so full.

The expedition to Japan completed, he reached home the last of 1853 after an absence of two years.

If the letters written on his first trip had made him well known, he was now really famous. As soon as it was known that he had reached home scores of letters poured in upon him, urging him to lecture before his interested countrymen. A new calling was thus opened to him and while he had no admiration for himself as an orator, he took advantage of the demand and began an extensive lecture tour which extended from Maine to Wisconsin. Besides the labor incident to this work, he was also busy arranging materials for several new books of travel which he had gathered on his recent extended trip.

Lecturing was hard work, and it left deep traces on our author. After four years of constant labor his weary spirit turned again toward the ocean, and the lands beyond, for rest and recreation. This time he was to see what the North had to offer both in summer and winter seasons. With him, the mere curiosity of sight seeing had long ago been satisfied, and in its stead had come the love of truth, which characterizes the explorer. This time he was accompanied by his two sisters, and a brother to whom he wished to give a taste of European travel. After a delighted visit at Gotha, Bayard left his party, and proceeded North. For two months we must imagine him, as he himself says, "driving his reindeer over the solid snow in the

sunless days of the Polar Circle." The intense cold which he endured made him, he said, know how statues feel; still he persisted, until he had accomplished his desire of penetrating this frozen region. His skill in painting served him well, and he brought back many sketches of the wonders he had seen in the icebound region. He then visited London, to superintend an English edition of one of his books, and there met the leading literary men of the day, Dickens, Thackeray, Browning, Leigh Hunt and, above all, he was welcomed to the secluded shades of Farringford, Tennyson's home on the Isle of Wight. The companion piece of this London picture, where Bayard Taylor sits among his English peers, is the one on this side of the water where Longfellow, Bryant, Whittier, Fields and Stoddard loved to gather about the famous traveler, and listen to tales of the wonders he had seen.

In October 1857, Taylor was married to Marie Hansen, and the young couple at once took up their residence in Athens, where the present, no less than the past of that city occupied the thought, and roused the admiration of our poet-traveler. The following autumn, the family, now increased by a baby girl named Lillian, her father's only child, left for America.

From the revenues from various sources it now

seemed feasible to put in execution his long cherished plan of building his house at Cedarcroft, so that the next two years' literary work ran alongside the delights and perplexities of house-building. In his dreams of a house, he had long before decided that it should have a tower, and be built upon a ridge. Brick was the material selected, and when the cornerstone was laid, there was great ceremony. A zinc box containing a copy of "Views Afoot," a poem by Taylor, and one by Stoddard, a *Tribune*, and some coins, were placed beneath it, and each one of the family assisted with a trowel full of mortar, even to little Lillian. The grounds had been cultivated and trees planted by the affectionate hands of Taylor. Over the portal was the inscription "Bayard Marie Taylor, 1859." When the house stood complete, and his father and mother, sisters and brothers had been gathered within it, it seemed as if the greatest dream of its owner had been accomplished, as words like these show: "While I live I trust I shall have my trees, my peaceful, idyllic landscape, my free country life at least half the year; and while I possess so much with the ties out of which all this has grown, I shall own one hundred thousand shares in the Bank of Contentment, and consider that I hold a second Mortgage Bond on the railroad to the Celestial City."

Notwithstanding the ideal state here pictured, there were disappointments too, for the house had cost much more than had been estimated, and the amount needful to carry on so large an establishment called for constant exertion. Moreover, lectures were not in demand, as they had been. It seems the old story of Abbotsford and Scott repeated, for it was only a few years before Cedarcroft was put into the hands of an agent, that Taylor might be relieved of its care and expense. The place, however, was not sold, but sometime later when Taylor went to New York to live, he turned it over to his father and mother.

We turn from this dreary bit of financial history to that more pleasing side, the life and hospitality of this country-house. The first was delightful, as artists and literary men, who frequently visited Cedarcroft, all aver. As to the hospitality of the host and hostess, it knew no limits. It was open house to all the country round. The revels of Christmas were especially remembered by those who took part in them. It was the gala time of all the year and its celebration savored strongly of similar festivities in the Fatherland of the good mistress of Cedarcroft.

Our versatile writer now turned his attention to novel writing, in which he gained a moderate success especially in "Hannah Thurston," and "The Story of

Kennett." He spent a short time in St. Petersburg, as Secretary of our legation there, and returned to America when the Civil War was at its height, but not before his brother Fred had been killed at Gettysburg.

"By-Ways of Europe" was the result of another trip to Europe, undertaken as usual to rest the overworked owner of Cedarcroft. Another plan had been forming in his mind too, that of translating "Faust." Many had tried the task, but they had stopped short at the close of part first. Taylor's plan was to do both parts and add copious notes after the manner of Longfellow's translation of Dante, and Bryant's of the *Illiad* and *Odyssey*. In this work, he was successful, the first part appearing in 1870, and the second, one year later. It received the most hearty approval of scholars in Germany and America, and is his greatest monument as a scholar.

He had remuneration from many lines of work, but Greeley had died, and the *Tribune* stock did not pay the dividends it used to yield. This paper had to be organized again, on a new basis, and it became necessary for Taylor to enter again upon the drudgery of a journalist's work. Worn and discouraged as he was, he performed his duties as carefully as though each article he wrote were signed by his name.

In 1876, he delivered the National Ode at the Centennial, and the power of the production, no less than of its delivery, made every step of his progress home an ovation. He enjoyed the approbation of his fellows, and though the excitement wore plainly upon him, the knowledge that he had pleased his countrymen was sweet to this tired man.

It had long been in his mind to write the lives of Goethe and Schiller, and there was a loud call for a work of this kind from such men even as Carlyle. Taylor was planning such a work, and how best to gather material, when he was appointed, by President Hayes, our Minister to Berlin. Great was the satisfaction everywhere expressed at this appointment. Germany and America rejoiced together, the former that a man already devoted to their people and their customs should be sent among them as a diplomat; the latter, that we were to be represented in one of the most important foreign countries by a man of letters. To Bayard Taylor, it came like a blessing in the form of a great opportunity, for while other diplomats were taking recreation could he not toil on his beloved task in the very archives of his subject?

For nearly two months from the time of his appointment, until he sailed for Berlin, he was feasted and fêted by Americans and Germans, until, although the

excitement kept him up, he was on the verge of an utter break-down, so that during the first days at sea an attack of brain fever was feared. But the ocean proved as it did with him usually, a great restorer, and he landed in Germany apparently much improved. It was evident, however, that a mortal disease had fastened itself upon him. Though he was able to perform the duties of his office, there were alternate periods of suffering and improvement until December of the year he reached Berlin, when he sank rapidly and died on the 19th. Three days later, Berthold Auerbach, in the name of the German people, pronounced a beautiful tribute, over the lifeless form of his friend, who was, as he said, "born in the New World, ripened in the Old, and alas, severed so early from the tree of life!" The following spring the body was brought to New York and thence taken to Cedar-croft, in the vicinity of which he was buried, among the relatives to whom he had always been so true. The greatest and best of his countrymen helped to lay him away, and the monument above him, by its oak leaves with bay intertwined, proclaims the poetic and civil honors he won while he lived among us.

QUESTIONS ON BAYARD TAYLOR.

Describe the section of which Bayard Taylor was a native.

Of what stock did he come?

Speak of the relations of Taylor and his mother.

What were some of his favorite books?

What can you say of his education?

What preparation did he make for the career of journalist?

Give a history of his connection with the *New York Tribune*?

Who was Horace Greeley and how did he influence the early years of Taylor's life?

Describe the tour that gave rise to "Views Afoot."

What other works of Bayard Taylor were the results of his travels?

Who was Mary Agnew and what influence did she have on the life of Bayard Taylor?

Speak of Taylor as a lecturer.

Name some of his distinguished friends abroad. At home.

Describe the location and building of Cedarcroft.

In what other literary lines did Taylor work?

What was his most scholarly work?

Tell what you can of his "Centennial Ode."

To what important public position was he appointed by President Hayes?

How was his appointment received at home and abroad?

What were the circumstances of his death?

Where is he buried?

Name any American poems in which he is mentioned.

Quote passages referring to him.

ESSAY SUBJECTS.

Christmas at Cedarcroft.

The Literature of Travel.

Purposes of Travel.

Bayard Taylor the Poet.

Requirements of a Good Translator.

OUTLINE FOR BAYARD TAYLOR.

I. The Americans as travelers.

Some great American travelers.

II. Life and works.

1. Of Quaker and German descent.
2. Father and mother persons of marked personality.
(Notice the letters of Taylor to his mother.)
3. Birth at Kennett Square, Penn., in 1825.
4. As a child averse to toil and fond of books.
5. Education.
 - a. In the country schools and academies of the section.
 - b. Skilled in drawing and composition.
6. His love for Mary Agnew, its influence on his life, and its sad termination.
7. Chooses journalism as his life work.
 - a. Apprenticed to a printer.
 - b. Travels in the interest of several newspapers.
8. The traveler, writer of travels, and the lecturer.
 - a. "Views Afoot" the result of a two years' tramp abroad.
 - b. "Eldorado" result of a trip to California.
 - c. Visits Greece, Palestine, India and Japan.
 - d. Visits the polar regions.
 - e. "By-ways of Europe."
 - f. A popular lecturer on his own experiences.
9. Marriage to Marie Hansen, an accomplished German lady — later his best biographer.
10. The founding of a home.
 - a. Cedarcroft farm bought.
 - b. A sort of castle built.
 - c. A home of magnificent hospitality.
11. The translator of Faust.
The equal of Longfellow's translation of Dante and Bryant's translation of Homer.
12. A writer of novels.
"Hannah Thurston" and "The Story of Kennett."
13. Minister to Berlin.
14. Death at Berlin in 1878.
15. Burial at Cedarcroft.



JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

About a mile west of Harvard Square, the visitor to Cambridge finds a fine old colonial mansion set among trees so dense that in summer it is hardly visible from the road. The house stands on an eminence, and the sloping lawns are studded with clumps of shrubbery, bunches of old-fashioned ribbon-grass and *fleur-de-lis* and splendid fruit and shade trees. Among these last the elm seems king, and every little distance one looms up so majestic, so superior of its kind, that the observer instinctively feels that a story is linked with so venerable a settler, at least the story of a nation's growth — trees so fine that poets may well write of them, as they protect the loiterer from the blazing sun or furnish among their leafy boughs homes to thousands of robins and thrushes. This estate of thirteen acres stretches to beautiful Mount Auburn Cemetery, and the river Charles of which Longfellow was so fond. It stands here among modern houses a relic of pre-Revolutionary times, for it was built by Thomas Oliver, the last lieutenant-governor of Massachusetts. After he went

to England, it became the property of Elbridge Gerry, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and later on, Vice-President of the United States. It was then purchased by the Reverend Charles Lowell, who planted most of the trees and gave it the name of Elmwood. It has since remained in this family, who very jealously guard it from all modern improvements.

Such was the home, with its surrounding and associations, from which was carried, in August, 1891, the dead form of our own illustrious Lowell — the poet, critic, essayist, reformer, diplomatist, and above all a *man* of whom America may well be proud.

The Lowells in this country trace their descent to Percival Lowell, a merchant of Bristol, England, who settled in Newbury, Mass., in 1636. In every generation the family has proved itself of sterling worth, giving to the country men of stainless character, and of wide and varied intellectual and practical power. Who would not pride himself on a line of ancestors numbering among them Francis Cabot Lowell, the founder of the town that bears his name; John Lowell, an eminent judge and author of the clause in the Massachusetts Constitution abolishing slavery; that younger John Lowell who established with his own wealth the Lowell Institute in Boston; and

Charles Lowell, the eminent divine and father of the poet? The lustre of such ancestors is in no way dimmed by the Lowells of this generation, for not alone was our poet in this century great—his brothers and sisters and nephews have been, and are, people of eminence. They have written and taught, and the nephews did not consider life itself too dear to be given to their country in her hour of need.

On Washington's birthday, in 1819, James Russell Lowell was born at Elmwood, the home of his lifetime and the place where he died. He was the youngest of five children, two girls and three boys, born to Charles and Harriet Lowell. The rearing of these children was a peculiar mixture. The plain style of New England sixty years ago was brightened by touches which the Celtic vein in the mother made second nature to her. She was exceedingly fond of ancient songs and ballads and these she repeated and sang to her children until they became saturated with this wine of poesy, until whatever germs of poetry were born with them were nurtured into full bloom.

This devotion to the beautiful and romantic was balanced by the example of the father, whose devotion to duty and to a high plane of spiritual living never wavered during a long life time. One of the great sorrows of this family was that the delicate mind of

the mother, with all its subtle imaginings and wonderful memorizing, became lost in the darkness of insanity — all its lovely qualities “like sweet bells jangled out of tune.” In “The Darkened Mind” the poet gives in pathetic lines this bit of gloomy family history. To offset this picture there was a pleasanter one of a calm, dignified old man, who lived at Elmwood until his children had grown to maturity and fame.

William Wells, who kept a classical school almost across the street from Elmwood, was considered the best master to fit boys for Harvard, and at this school Lowell was instructed, so that at the age of sixteen he entered college. The school was of that severe type in which fear of the ferule was more prominent than love of learning. William Story, the life-long friend of the poet, was at the same time a day student at this school, and the two afterwards entered Harvard together.

Lowell's career at college was marked by great devotion to books *not* laid down in the prescribed course. At one time he was sent to Concord to make up back work, because as he himself says, “At home I'd proved a dunce.” While in college he had written some poetry, and he was chosen poet of his class. On the eve of graduation, however, he was suspended for some boyish prank and not allowed to

read his poem, though his mates, with whom he was very popular, pleaded earnestly for him. There is a rumor that he watched the out-door exercises of his class from a rent in the cover of a canvas-covered wagon. At all events he took the degree of A. B. in 1838, and three years later became "Master of Arts." In his class poem there was a spirit which struck the key-note of his later career as a reformer; it contained a tribute to Channing and an eloquent protest against expelling the Cherokees.

This note of reform so early sounded was about to be developed in a striking manner through the influence of Maria White, the sister of one of his classmates, and the daughter of the most prominent citizen of Watertown, a village adjoining Cambridge. Her temperament was naturally reformatory, and her training had been in the same line. She was a beautiful and gifted woman, with the soul of a poet and the enthusiasm of a revolutionist. Lowell's love for her developed in him the poet, and she herself made him the fearless reformer that he was. These lovers became the centre of a joyous circle of young people, who gladly accepted this "king and queen" as their leaders. The father of the young lady withheld his consent to their marriage until Lowell should settle down to something more substantial than poetry and

fine ideas of reform. In the meantime the whole circle took a real interest in the lovers and their most secret doings — the love letters were almost common property, as were the poems, not a few, that Lowell wrote for his sweetheart.

After a prescribed amount of drudgery among law books, Lowell was admitted to the bar and his marriage was solemnized. There was no promise of their lover-days that was not crowned with abundant fruition, save the increasing delicacy of the poet's wife, and the loss of their little ones almost as soon as they had gladdened the stern old mansion. Of four or five only one lived to grow up ; — Mrs. Burnett — and to her was given the joy of solacing the last hours of her idolized father.

The publication of his first volume of poetry — "A Year's Life," — hastened the close of his professional career, not that the work it contained was so meritorious as that he had found the "saw-dust-eating" period of a young lawyer's life in a great city wholly unsweetened by hope of better things to come. So he turned from the sheep-skin books of the law to the other books with which his father's library had always been so plentifully provided and determined to rise or fall with them.

Just previous to his marriage, the *Boston Miscellany*

was published, the outgrowth of the "Brothers and Sisters" as the coterie of friends called themselves. It was an effort to elevate the magazine of the day above the mere fashion books which alone then bore that name. The next step along the line of magazine development was taken by Lowell himself, in the *Pioneer*, which died, probably of pure excellence, after the publication of its third number, for it was contributed to by the leading talent of the day — Story, Poe, Hawthorne and Eliz. Barrett being prominent among them. From this beginning came in time the *Atlantic Monthly*. His poems continued to appear, growing better and better all the time and losing the imitative style which characterized his earlier work. In 1845, appeared "The Vision of Sir Launfal," the ecstatic work of forty-eight hours through which the poet toiled, without food or sleep, to clothe in finest poetry one of the commonest lessons of life — to do the thing which lies *next* and not go searching into remote parts for the lofty, the ideal. The preludes to the two parts of which the poem is composed are complete in themselves and as perennial in their beauty and aptitude as are the seasons they celebrate — leafy June and icy winter.

The first series of the "Biglow Papers" was written during the Mexican War and gave in the telling

dialect of the New England Yankee the opinion in the North regarding a war which must ever stand one of the blemishes on our national records. They are *satire*, the best America has produced and they rank with the great literature of this class in England, Butler's "Hudibras" and the satires of Dryden. In the work, the letters, poems and notes, purporting to have been written by Hosea Biglow, are collected and published by Parson Homer Wilbur, a typical New England minister, whose scholastic manner of writing and his fréquent use of Latin quotations distinguish him in a very marked manner from the homely New England farmer, Hosea. Birdofredom Sawin, who is occasionally heard from, is the clown of the work. The ideas emphasized are largely those of the Free Soil Party. Those contrary are ridiculed in a good-natured but telling way. When the Yankee vernacular is not a lofty enough vehicle for the author's more elevated sentiments, Parson Wilbur comes to the front in strains of scholastic eloquence. The poet, however, frequently rises to heights of exquisite poetry, using the dialect. How could the English taught in the schools enhance the beauty of this description?—

“ April's come back ; the swellin' buds of oak
Dim the fur hillsides with a purplish smoke,

The brooks are loose an', singing to be seen,
(Like gals,) make all the hollers soft and green;
The birds are here for all the season's late;
They take the sun's height an' don' never wait;
Soon'z he officially declares it's spring
Their light hearts lift 'em on a north'ard wing,
An' th' ain't an acre, fur ez as you can hear,
Can't, by the music, tell the time o' year."

These papers, first published in the *Boston Courier*, attracted universal attention, and many parts of them soon became current phrases among a pleased people. At first it was unknown who the author was. Lowell was hardly suspected, as his former works were scarcely thought to warrant his authorship of the 'Biglow Papers.' He, himself, one evening, in the intervals of a concert, overheard a very clever demonstration that he could *not* have been their author. Nearly twenty years later, when the Civil War was devastating all our land, the "Biglow Papers" were resumed in a second series inferior in no respect to the first, and adding to all their excellences an element of pathos so delicate, so penetrating, that only a man who had known the sadness that comes from voices forever hushed and steps that come no more could have written them; — several little mounds in Mount Auburn Cemetery, marking the resting-place of wife and children, and three nephews, gallant men slain in

battle, had made their lasting impression on the poet's soul, as verses like these show :

“ Rat-tat-tat-tattle thru the street,
I hear the drummers makin' riot,
An' I set thinkin' o' the feet
Thet follered once an' now are quiet —
White feet ez snowdrops innercent,
That never knowed the paths o' Satan,
Whose comin' steps ther's ears thet won't
No, not lifelong, leave off waitin'

Why, hain't I held 'em on my knee?
Didn't I love to see 'em growin',
Three likely lads ez wal could be,
Hahnsome an' brave an' not tu knowin'?
I set an' look into the blaze,
Whose natur', jes' like their'n, keeps climbin'
Ez long'z it lives, in shinin' ways,
An' half despise myself for rhymin'.

Wut's words to them whose faith an' truth
On War's red techstone rang true metal,
Who ventured life an' love an' youth
For the great prize of death in battle?”

The occasion has passed away, but the “Biglow Papers” remain the greatest monument of a patriot's zeal and a poet's power.

The year in which the first “Biglow Papers” were collected was also marked by the appearance of another humorous work, “The Fable for Critics,” in which our own authors march in procession before Apollo and have their pictures taken, as it were. The peculiari-

ties of the authors are aptly utilized, and we involuntarily smile as we recognize a loved author. Himself, even, he has criticised most accurately.

In 1851, he visited Europe with his wife, whose health was rapidly declining, and who died two years later. His life seemed irreparably broken, and a period of almost total literary dearth followed. The anguish that he felt in the absence of a loved presence is beautifully expressed in his poem, "After the Burial" —

"There's a narrow ridge in the grave-yard
Would scarce stay a child in his race,
But to me and my thought it is wider
Than the star-sown vague of space."

"Communion in spirit! Forgive me,
But I, who am earthy and weak,
Would give all my income from dream-land
For one touch of her hand on my cheek."

Longfellow expressed his sympathy in the poem, "Two Angels," from which these lines are wonderful for their beauty —

"And softly from that hushed and darkened room,
Two angels issued, where but one went in."

Mrs. Lowell's death took place the same night a child was born to Longfellow, hence the force of the line,

"Two angels, one of Life and one of Death."

In 1855, Lowell was appointed to succeed Longfellow in the chair of Modern Literature in Harvard College. He visited Europe with a view to more extended preparation for his position. An interesting story is told of what determined the length of his visit abroad. He left word with his London bankers to notify him when his account should stand at a certain figure. This they did, and he immediately returned home and took up his work. Though this seems an abrupt termination to his study, he had been abroad two years when it came. Years afterward he received a letter from the bank telling him that a mistake had been made in his favor, and enclosing a draft for the amount and interest on the same. The money had increased to £700, and with this he furnished his house.

In Harvard he was a popular and learned lecturer. His lectures on Chaucer, Dante, and Cervantes were a moulding influence upon the institution. Some idea of the store of learning and the rich and elegant style of these lectures may best be obtained from his essays, which, by the way, no student of literature or of English can afford to be without — his essays are not criticisms merely, but rich store-houses of learning as well.

Two events of importance mark the year 1857. In

September he was married to Frances Dunlap, an accomplished woman who had had charge of his daughter's education, and in November the *Atlantic Monthly* was started with Lowell as editor. This position he held until 1862, when he was succeeded by J. T. Fields. The object in starting the magazine was to have a medium for circulating anti-slavery ideas.

"The Commemoration Ode," read at Harvard in July, 1865, stands as the one great poem of the war, and indeed our best poem of the kind. William W. Story came all the way from Rome to hear it delivered, and he felt repaid. The commemoration exercises were held in the open air in the presence of a great crowd of people. Few scenes in our history have been more impressive. A great war had just closed successfully, but the attending joy had been chastened by public and private loss, for Lincoln was dead, and there was hardly a household that did not mourn some loved one given to the cause. Among the eminent speakers was General Mead, the hero of Gettysburg. The day was drawing to its close when the poet began the reading of his ode. With face illumined and voice electrified, he thrilled the people, and, though only a tithe of the meaning of this great poem could be conveyed by a single and first reading, scholars, soldiers,

and common citizens were lost in admiration and tears. Read this description of Lincoln and see if such a poem can ever die or even become dusty for lack of readers — there is inspiration in every line for even the poorest child that reads it, for did not this "First American" develop from a poverty-stricken child of the backwoods?

" Nature, they say, doth dote
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote ;
For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,
And choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth
And brave old wisdom of sincerity !
Standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly, earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American."

The dedication of the poem betrayed the poet, the patriot, and the brother ; — "To the ever sweet and shining memory of the ninety-three sons of Harvard College who have died for their country in the war for nationality." There followed in quick succession

the more profound part of Lowell's poetry — the collection, "Under the Willows," and "The Cathedral." His prose works, too, were appearing and making readers glad. The things he saw and heard and thought by those far-famed "Study Windows," he makes of such absorbing interest that the reader forgets to regret that the poet has descended to prose.

After the war closed, Lowell's life was of a quiet nature. One year was much like all the others. The comforts of Elmwood became more and more to him, and he settled down to the calm enjoyment of his ancestral home. The second Mrs. Lowell was in every way adapted to the position she occupied of companion and counsellor to a great poet.

The friends he gathered about him were a continual joy — Longfellow and Emerson, the genial Autocrat, Holmes, Estes Howe, George William Curtis, and the poet-publisher, J. T. Fields, Agassiz, Stillman and Rouse the artists, and Professor Child and President Felton of Harvard were only a few of those who brightened with their wit and learning the hospitable rooms of Elmwood. In order to meet his numerous friends informally, his house used to be thrown open Sunday afternoons.

The garden and grounds of Elmwood were an unfailing source of joyful occupation to the poet. He



ELMWOOD.

loved to walk among the trees, to prune, to plant, to listen to the song of the bird, or to watch the lithe movements of the squirrel. His "Garden Acquaintances" were hardly less interesting than his human friendships, as any one will testify who reads his delightful essay on that subject. In his house there was comfort rather than elegance — old family portraits and pictures painted by artist friends adorned the walls, and everywhere there seemed to be books testifying to their owner's love and mastery of them.

In person Lowell was of medium height, slender and active. His hair was dark auburn, and his full beard rather lighter and more glowing in tint. His eyes were blue and strongly expressed his varying moods. In conversation he was exceedingly vivacious. The native wit and common sense of Hosea Biglow are those of Lowell himself. As the best of all good company, only Holmes could equal him.

He was fond of walking, and though his habits were hardly methodical, he accomplished a great amount of work. In dress he was fastidious, though this seems to have developed in his later years, if one judges by the portrait painted by Page and now hanging in the hall at Elmwood. In religion Lowell grew more and more conservative, until at the time of his

death his views were almost the opposite of his father's, who had been a Unitarian minister.

From the ideal life at Elmwood, President Hayes called the poet to become Minister to Austria, which position was declined, and that of Minister to Spain accepted in its stead. Lowell had never before held even the lowest office and this came wholly unsolicited. The duties were chiefly social and well suited the temperament of the poet. When, however, he was transferred to the Court of St. James, he found work of a more pressing nature, and many knotty questions to settle. His reception in London, the literary centre of the world, was delightful. He and the English were at once the best of friends, and such they remained until the end of his life. His power of speech-making, a more uncommon accomplishment among Englishmen than with us, added to his other qualities, made him generally admired in social and official circles. If we judge by the state papers and dispatches of his term of service, and not by the judgment of fault-finding radicals at home, we must see that these friendly relations were maintained without Lowell's compromising one grain of his genuine Americanism. His broad-minded, scholarly conservatism deserves unlimited praise as doing more than the work of any previous minister to weld together the

English-speaking people on both sides of the Atlantic. When it was known in England that Lowell was dead, words of sympathy flashed across the water from the great ones in literature and in politics.

In 1885, Mrs. Lowell died in London, regretted by her English and American friends, for she was popular with both. In the same year, during Cleveland's administration, Lowell was recalled, and Mr. Phelps appointed in his stead. Far from having any feelings of animosity on account of the change, Lowell was foremost in praise of the new officer, in extending congratulations to him.

On his return home, he busied himself slightly with literature, giving lectures and addresses. He resided for a time with his daughter at Southborough, Mass., but in 1889 he returned with her and her children to Elmwood, where he occupied his last days with a life of his friend, Hawthorne.

Though his death was a surprise to most people, by his immediate friends it was known for more than a year that he could not live long. Aug. 12th of the year 1891, he died, at the age of seventy-two.

When we think of Bryant's eighty-four years and his matchless work up to the very last, or of Longfellow's seventy-five years, crowded to the end with poetry — when we bless our good fortune that we had

Whittier and Holmes among us after the snows of eighty winters had settled upon their devoted heads, we cannot but feel that Lowell was still a young man when he left us ; that possibly had he been spared a few years more, he might have given us, in the evening of his life, still other pledges of his greatness. Enough, however, he has left us to place him forever among earth's immortals in the Kingdom of Fame.

QUESTIONS ON LOWELL.

Where is Elmwood and why is it so called?

Give a brief historical account of this old mansion.

What other similar mansion near Elmwood?

Give some characteristics of Lowell's father. Of his mother.

Tell what you can of Lowell's career in Harvard College, both as a student, and as a professor.

What can you say of the influence of Maria White upon the life of the poet?

What event in Lowell's life was the occasion of Longfellow's beautiful lines?—

" And softly from that hushed and darkened room,
Two angels issued, where but one went in "

Who were some of Lowell's most distinguished friends?

Of what magazine was Lowell the first editor?

What was the condition of magazine literature in America when this new periodical made its appearance?

Tell what you can of Lowell's home life.

What is satire?

Show how the Biglow Papers conform to your definition.

Describe the two series of these papers.

Who are the leading characters?

Select some choice passages from the work.

Describe the plan of *The Fable for Critics*.

Is it fair in its estimates of literary men?

What poem of Lowell's is considered "the one great poem of the war"?

For what occasion was it written?

What poem of Lowell's is best known?

On what mediæval legend is it founded?

Quote your favorite passage.

Name some of Lowell's greatest critical essays.

Describe the essay, *My Garden Acquaintances*.

What important position did Lowell occupy abroad?

Why was he sometimes accused of "British tendencies"?
 Was the charge just?
 Describe Lowell's general appearance.
 What was his religion?

ESSAY SUBJECTS.

A Sunday Afternoon with Lowell.
 The Beauties of Sir Launfal.
 The Lesson of Sir Launfal.
 The Value of Magazine Literature.
 Lowell the Critic.
 Lowell the Poet.
 Lowell the Satirist.

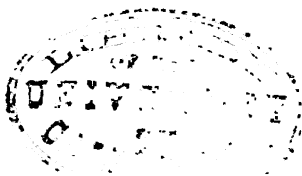
OUTLINE FOR JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

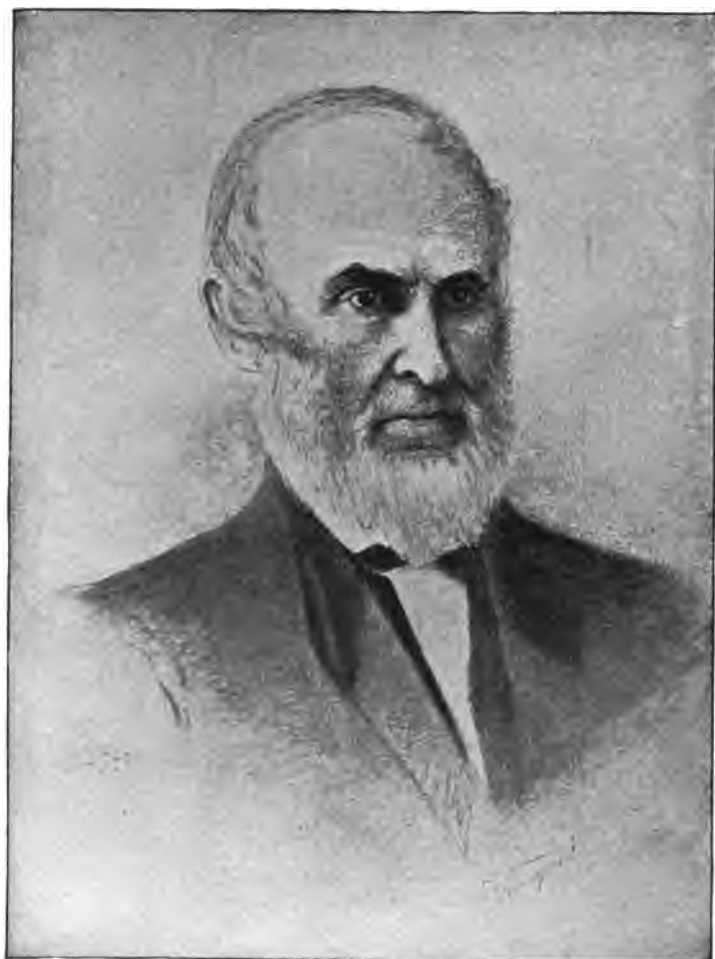
- I. General description and history of Elmwood, Lowell's home at Cambridge.
- II. Life.
 1. Descent from illustrious ancestors.
 2. Born in 1819, one of five children.
 3. Education.
 - a. Early training in private school at home and in Concord.
 - b. Degree of A. B. at Harvard, in 1838.
 - c. Study abroad to prepare specially for position of Modern Literature at Harvard.
 4. Admitted to the bar — an unwilling law student.
 5. Marriage to Maria White, a woman devoted to philanthropy.
 6. Growing merit of his poetry leads to the abandonment of the law.
 7. Succeeds Longfellow as professor in Harvard.
 A popular and learned lecturer.
 8. First editor of *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1857.
 9. Appointed minister to Spain and later to England.
 - a. A scholarly representative from the New World to the Old.
 - b. A general favorite abroad.

10. Death, August 12, 1891.

III. Works.

1. Prose. Essays mostly critical, Milton, Chaucer, Wordsworth, Shakespeare Once More, etc.
2. Poetry.
 - a. Satires. Biglow Papers. Fable for Critics.
 - b. War poem. Commemoration Ode.
 - c. General. Vision of Sir Launfal. Under the Willows.





JOHN G. WHITTIER.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

“All honor and praise to the right-hearted bard
Who was true to The Voice when such service was hard,
Who himself was so free he dared sing for the slave
When to look but a protest in silence was brave.”

— Lowell.

Whittier has not the liberated, light-winged, Greek imagination—imagination not involved and included in the religious sentiment, but playing in epic freedom and with various interpretations between religion and intellect; he has not the flowing, Protean imaginative sympathy, the power of instant self-identification with all forms of character and life which culminated in Shakespeare; but that imaginative vitality which lurks in faith and conscience, producing what we may call *ideal force of heart*. This he has eminently; and it is this central, invisible, Semitic heat which makes him a poet.

— David Wasson.

In the latter part of the reign of Charles I., there appeared in England a man who was destined to found a sect, which, if it has never attained great numbers, has been during all its history a power for good. I refer to that sect known as Quakers but more properly called the Society of Friends. They were one of the many sects that arose in the seventeenth century to resist the exactions of the Church of England and to cast off those of its forms which had

come to take the place of true soul-worship. So at least thought George Fox, the founder of Quakerism, and so he taught, leading an itinerant life from village to village, calling upon men and women to give up outward forms and frivolities and listen to the teachings of the inward spirit — a true and sufficient guide. Their persecution, which at once began, only fanned into glowing enthusiasm their ardor, and they carried their religious message into other countries. There were those who felt that the severity of the Quaker costume, that the plain language *thee* and *thou*, that using the simple names for the days of the week — *first day second day*, etc., instead of the heathen names we use, were not denials enough to practice, so they went further — to extremes which their leader always discouraged and which is no part of true Quakerism.

About the time that Fox was traveling from town to town, disseminating his ideas and gathering about him hopeful bands of anxious men and women, there came to Massachusetts from Southampton, England, Thomas Whittier, the direct ancestor of our beloved Quaker poet, J. G. Whittier. In the history of the colony, it is recorded that he brought into the settlement the first hive of bees. May we not, in our fancy, look upon this hive of bees as prophetic of the sweet poetry

to be written years hence by the descendant of their owner? Why not, if of old, the poet's words were so sweet that the bees swarmed about his lips? Though this early progenitor of the poet was not a declared Quaker, yet his descendents ever since have adhered more or less closely to the society of Friends. He settled first at Salisbury, but moved soon to Haverhill, in the Merrimac Valley, where he built a log house in which his family lived for many years. About 1688 he built the two story frame house which has ever since remained in the Whittier family and it was here that the poet was born. This house with its little stream in front and with great trees all about it, is still in a good state of perservation though it shows a few marks of there storer, who so wilfully destroys the old to make *his* improvements.

The poet's father was John Whittier, great great grandson to Thomas Whittier, the founder of the family in this country. Abigail Hussey, his mother, was descended from a fellow townsman of Thomas Whittier, and her ancestors, both in England and America, were people of note. It is to the alliance of this family with the Batchelders of New Hampshire that we owe the relationship of Daniel Webster and Whittier. Long before it was known that they had any common ancestors, a resemblance between them

was remarked by many, especially regarding their wonderful eyes for which both men were remarkable.

December 17th, 1807, Jonn Greenleaf Whittier was born at the old homestead. His early childhood is recorded in that universal favorite among his poems "The Barefoot Boy."



WHITTIER BIRTHPLACE.

The truest pictures of Whittier's early home and family are to be found in "Snowbound." The old house with its great square rooms, its time-stained rafters with nail points glistening above them from the roof boards, the father revered for his early adventures among Indians and trappers, the gentle mother telling

tales of wild hordes coming down on Cochecho town, or of early Quaker persecutions, are pictures lasting as our literature. No less enduring are those of sisters and brother, of aunt and uncle and guest that winter night. From its pages we learn of Mary, his eldest sister,

“ A full, rich nature, free to trust,
Truthful and almost sternly just; ”

of Elizabeth, afterwards the noble woman still most lovingly remembered for her good works,

“ Upon the motley braided mat,
Our youngest and our dearest sat,
Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes ”

Uncle Moses, who made his home in the Whittier family until his death, a man beloved of children, has been most affectionately remembered in the lines beginning,

“ Our uncle, innocent of books,
Was rich in lore of field and brooks,

A simple, guileless, childlike man
Content to live where life began, ”

And so, too,

“ The dear aunt, whose smile of cheer
And voice in dreams I seem to hear —
The sweetest woman ever Fate
Perverse denied a household mate. ”

The mysterious guest adds another element of interest to this Quaker home-circle, which few readers

will ever forget. Harriet Livermore, a brilliant and partially insane woman, who was a frequent visitor at the Whittier fireside. She must have deeply impressed the boy-poet's mind, for she is vividly recalled in the lines,

" Another guest that winter night
Flashed back from her lustrous eyes the light."

The opportunities for study in the neighborhood were scant. Three months of school during the year was all the time given the boys and girls in which to gain an education. Whittier began his school career at the age of seven with Joshua Coffin, who afterward became his life-long friend, as teacher. He had Coffin for instructor only a short time, for there was usually a new master every winter. In some mysterious way, however, the boy Whittier picked up a good fund of information, and before we can account for it, he became master, in a certain sense, of the art of versification. About twenty volumes made up the home library and these were read and re-read. The scarcity of reading material had this salutary effect, that he became a thorough and careful reader of the Bible, a fact that is strikingly apparent to every reader of his poems. With such a small library and a craving for more reading, it is hardly to be wondered at, that the loan of a copy of Burns' poems was a

memorable event in his life. His friend and teacher, Coffin, brought with him one night a copy of Burns, and read a few of the poems to his pupil, then fourteen years old. The boy was so delighted, that he begged his friend to leave the book with him for a time. The favor granted, he at once set about learning the Scotch dialect. His earliest poems are in the style of Burns, recalling not only the kindness of his old friend, but the time when, as a little child, he had been delighted with "a pawky auld carle of a Scotchman," who had found shelter under his father's roof, bringing with him some of the songs of Burns, which he recited for the entertainment of the household.

In referring to these early formative influences, we must not forget "Jonathan Plummer, maker of verses, pedler and poet, physician and parson, a Yankee Troubadour, first and last minstrel of the valley of the Merrimac." Twice a year he visited the country and was as welcome a guest as the minstrels of old to the ladies in hall and castle. He improvised readily and no event was too insignificant for him to celebrate in his song. In his mature years, Whittier wrote of his productions, "They answered as nearly as I can remember to Shakespeare's description of a proper ballad, 'doleful matter merrily set down, or-a very pleasant theme sung lamentably.'"

The next few years wrought great changes in the boy. The music of Burns had charmed him, and, encouraged by his elder sister, he began to write verses himself. Some of them were covertly sent to the local paper. When the number came in which they were printed, he was building a fence, with one of the elders. The news-carrier threw the paper to young Whittier, and, as he looked upon his lines in the "poet's corner," he was almost overcome.

Not long after the incident related above, William Lloyd Garrison, who had lately come to town and started a paper of his own, called on the young poet, whose identity had been betrayed to him by Whittier's older sister. He was hoeing corn when called to the house to meet a guest. He went in the back way "to make himself ready," for, in his working garb, he was hardly presentable, in that he had on only pantaloons, shirt and straw hat. "Who can want to see me?" was the thought uppermost in his mind as he prepared himself. This visit of the young editor marked an era in Whittier's life in several ways: first, the promise of their son was impressed upon the parents and it was shown them that he ought to have further opportunities of study; and, then and there, began that life-long intimacy between Whittier and Garrison, two great and good men.

A New England farm in those days did not give much revenue over and above the support of a family, and the parents of Whittier found that they could not spare the money necessary for a course at Haverhill Academy. Meanwhile, the young man labored on the farm and hoped for some opportunity. It came in a humble guise and in this way: One of the men with whom he worked on the farm made shoes during the winter. Knowing the boy's anxiety to make a little money, he offered to show him how to do the work. He learned readily and soon earned enough for six months at the Academy, and so he prepared to leave home—a very little “leaving,” in that the Academy was but three miles away, and he was able to go home every Friday night. A great point in his life had been reached, a narrow beginning of a great separation. Behind him, he left the rural valley; henceforth, father and mother, sisters and brother were to watch his growing fame through gathering tears that flowed, because, in his greatness, he had stepped from among them. Such indeed is every separation of the kind, though Whittier's was less strongly marked than many others for, however his genius lifted him from out of his family, his loving presence and solicitude were with them in an unusual degree to the end of his days.

At the Academy Whittier gave his attention to the ordinary English branches and took lessons in French besides. Pupils all the way from ten to twenty-five attended the school, and Whittier was a great favorite with the younger ones, among whom he was known as Uncle Toby. We are told by a woman who knew him at this time that he was a tall, straight, slight, handsome young man, always dressed with the utmost neatness. He was keenly sensitive to the ludicrous; witty and spirited in his conversation. He was frugal, thrifty and independent, and delicate and chivalrous to women.

Following this term of school, Whittier had his only experience as a school teacher. After one winter's teaching he returned to the Academy for another six months. This was the extent of his education in the schools. For the rest of his culture he had not even resorted to travel, as so many literary men have done. He never crossed the Atlantic nor penetrated the far West. He was our "stay-at-home" poet, nor have his verses suffered on this account. He has verified his own lines,

" He who wanders widest lifts
No more of Beauty's jealous veil
Than he who from his doorway sees
The miracle of flowers and trees."

While at the Academy, Whittier had boarded with

the editor of the *Haverhill Gazette*. He then began those contributions to that paper which continued for thirty years.

Meanwhile, Garrison's first paper had failed and he had moved into Boston and established the *National Philanthropist*. Through his influence, a place was found for Whittier on the *American Manufacturer*, which he practically edited for a time at the meager salary of \$9 per week. His help being needed on the farm, however, he returned home for a year, and next appears as a writer for, and editor of, the *New England Weekly Review*. Much of Whittier's early literary work was done on newspapers at a time when journalism consisted more in personal attacks than in the careful weighing of important questions of the day. Whittier's work of these years is hardly touched by this fault.

Garrison's *Liberator* was established in 1831, and Whittier, much influenced by this paper and its editor, printed at his own expense a pamphlet relating to the expediency of abolishing slavery. With this began Whittier's career in the anti-slavery cause. For more than thirty years his enthusiasm never waned. He served the cause with his time, his money and his genius, as the dearest thing in his life. In this work he began so early that even in Massachusetts it was an

unpopular subject of agitation. The threats of the infuriated mob and even the destruction of his property did not make him hesitate in the great work. He sang like a prophet of old against the evil of slavery, as his "Poems on Slavery" prove, from the humble song of the negro, as he toils at his unrequited task, to the superb "Ichabod," in which he most bitterly lashes Webster, his own kinsman, for compromising with the great wrong. He hated oppression in every form. Perhaps the wrongs done his own sect in former times gave deeper fire to his crusading spirit. The persecuted everywhere, the Indian and the negro alike, could be sure of his support, of his encouragement. If *war* was against his doctrine as a Quaker, there certainly was never before so war-like a peace-lover. Most of our poets have been on the side of Freedom, but that cause does well to claim Whittier as its laureate, for as someone has said, "From 1832 to 1865 his harp of liberty was never hung up."

Whittier himself sings :

" O Freedom ! if to me belong
Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,
Nor Marvel's wit and graceful song,
Still with a love as deep and strong
As theirs, I lay, like th m, my best gifts on thy shrine ! "

Besides writing poems for the cause, he served as secretary of the National Anti-Slavery Society, and

was for a time editor of the *Pennsylvania Freeman* in Philadelphia, in which place his office and what it contained was burned by a mob.

Aggressive as he had been in his writings, when the war, with all its horrors, came upon the country, no one sorrowed more deeply than he for the bitterness which it left in its track. Look over his poems "In War-time." They are tinged with the blood of battle or the heaviness of the war-cloud. If he ventures to write on any other theme, he does so with an apology for having other thoughts than those of his country's welfare at so critical a time. Notice the joy that pervades every verse he wrote about the time the war closed,—the *Laus Deo* having no other aim than to celebrate the return of peace. His "two angels" are "one of peace and one of war," and what joy he feels when the former triumphs!

Whittier's home life had always been of the simplest nature, but filled with all the comfort of a true home-lover. During the years when he wrote most of his works, his home was at Amesbury, and the house there is still as it used to be with its cosy study with pleasant open fire and shelves lined with books. To this home he brought his mother and aunt when his father died, and it was over this house that his beloved sister Elizabeth presided with so much grace and

dignity. The mutual affection of the brother and sister, their sympathy in literary matters and the genius of both, makes us think of the life of Charles and Mary Lamb. The death of this sister it was which made the house at Amesbury so desolate. He then made his home with distant relatives who lived at Danvers, Mass. Their home, Oak Knoll, was much enjoyed by the poet, for it is a truly beautiful place surrounded by blue hills, and with its fine large yard filled with trees of all the New England varieties — was a great treat to so devoted an admirer of trees as Whittier.

Though Mr. Whittier was very reticent in public, yet he was fond of his friends and enjoyed nothing more than entertaining them. In the course of his long life he gathered about him a wide circle of friends and acquaintances, including nearly all the great men and women of New England. People always delighted to do him honor. The dinner given in Boston on the occasion of his 70th birthday illustrates this. Holmes, Lowell, Longfellow and Emerson felt honored to write verses and make speeches in honor of the occasion. His own response to all this was characteristic of the man and his poetry :

“ Beside that milestone where the level sun
Nigh unto setting, sheds his last, low rays
On word and work, irrevocably done,

Life's blending threads of good and ill outspun,
I hear, O friends! your words of cheer and praise,
Half doubtful if myself or otherwise."

All the attention in the world could not flatter him. His estimate of what he accomplished is given in "My Triumph," and all admirers of his could not make him think more highly of that work.

His health was always delicate and it was necessary for him to be most careful in his exercise and food. Tobacco and wine he never tasted, and he was unable to read or write long at a time. Through his entire life he was a Quaker in speech and worship. His dress, too, to a certain extent, conformed to that prescribed by the Society. No better comment can be made on the abstemiousness of Whittier's habits than the long life that was given him, for he lived to the ripe age of eighty-five.

Of his works we need hardly speak, so well are they known and loved. His masterpiece is undoubtedly "Snow Bound" of which we have already spoken, an idyl as perfect in our literature as "Cotter's Saturday Night" in English. There are, besides, hymns so sacred that we would as soon do without the Psalms as without them — such are "The Eternal Goodness" and "Our Master." Ballads of peace and of war abound. Who can ever forget "Barbara Frietchie" or "Mable Martin?"

"Tent on the Beach" is perhaps his most extensive work. Like Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn" or Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," it is made up of stories in verse purporting to have been told by a company of men seeking rest and recreation. Not only are the stories of great interest, but the introductions and interludes as well. Nowhere can be found such a description of Bayard Taylor,

" So traveled there was scarce a land
Or people left him to exhaust : "

or of James T. Fields,

" That lettered magnate lording o'er
An ever-widening realm of books."

What he says of himself is quite as true to life, though given in the modest spirit natural to a man describing himself,

" Such music as the woods and streams
Sang in his ear he sang aloud."

"Among the Hills" and "The Last Walk in Autumn" are gems of their kind, the one a story of the union of city maid and rural lad—"a man to match his mountains" however, and having a realistic introduction—a poem in itself—picturing the flowers of New England.

A large share of his poems have a personal interest that makes them very dear to the reader. There is one

on Garrison, another on Sumner, one on Lydia Maria Child, one to Lowell and so on. Indeed most of his friends have received loving tributes from his magic pen. "The Singer," one of his most delightful personal poems, tells how the Cary Sisters, those birds of song, sought his home from the far West. They knew to whom they came, for he was always most kindly helpful to young authors.

Through all his poetry there is the gold and amber of the maple, autumn-kissed, the breath of the pines, wind-tossed by Boreas, and the scent of the May-flower piercing the last light snow of winter. And in his ripe old age he poured out in sweet poems the "witch hazel" of his genius — gold of late autumn, but sweet and strong, and full of promise like all his other works.

QUESTIONS ON WHITTIER.

Who were the Quakers?

When and by whom was the sect founded?

What are some of their peculiar customs?

Why should a study of the Quakers precede a study of Whittier?

Who was the first Whittier in America and when did he come to this country?

Where did he finally settle?

Describe the old homestead where Whittier, the poet, was born?

To what great public man was Whittier related? How?

What poem of Whittier's describes his own boyhood?

In what longer poem are more of his home relations referred to?

Name the people referred to in this poem and quote a line or more about each.

Who was Joshua Coffin and what influence did he have on the poet's life?

Speak of Whittier's early admiration for the poetry of Burns.

Who was Jonathan Plummer?

What great cause did Garrison represent?

Relate how the friendship of Whittier and this man began and how it continued.

Name the different ways in which Whittier identified himself with the Abolition movement.

Which do you consider his most effective line of work and why?

Tell what you know of Whittier's education.

What common means of culture was altogether absent from Whittier's life?

How was Whittier enabled to attend the Academy?

• Speak of Whittier's labors as a journalist.

Tell what you can of Elizabeth Whittier.

What bachelors have we among our American writers besides Whittier?

Quote from Whittier to show his estimate of his own work.

Give some interesting points in Whittier's personality.

Describe "Tent on the Beach."

What friends of his are represented in the introduction to this poem?

Name some of Whittier's personal poems.

What can you say of their number?

Name some of his poems on slavery.

Where was Oak Knoll?

How old was Whittier when he died?

Where is he buried?

SUBJECTS FOR LANGUAGE WORK.

1. Whittier the Poet of New England.
2. Whittier the Laureate of Freedom.
3. Whittier at Home.
4. Elizabeth Whittier, Sister of the Poet.
5. Literary Bachelors.
6. Some Pictures from "Snow Bound."
7. The Quakers in America.
8. The Friendship of Whittier and Garrison.
9. In Whittier's Country.

OUTLINE OF WHITTIER'S LIFE.

- I. Born in Haverhill, Mass., December 17, 1807.
 1. Descended from broad-minded Quakers.
 2. Related to Webster through his mother.
- II. Youth — Spent mostly on his father's farm.
 1. Education.
 - a. In village school — winter terms.
 - b. At Haverhill Academy.

Earned money which enabled him to go to the Academy making shoes.
 2. Inspired by reading Burns.
 3. Friendship with Garrison.
 - a. Began in sympathy with Anti-slavery movement.
 - b. Continued through life.
- III. Manhood.
 1. Career in journalism.
 - a. Contributions to *Haverhill Gazette*.

These continued for thirty years.

- b. Editor of *American Manufacturer*.
- c. Contributions to the *New England Weekly Review*.
- d. Contributions to Garrison's *Liberator*.
- e. Editor of *Pennsylvania Freeman*.

Office and furniture burned by a mob.

2. Connection with Abolition Movement.

- a. Printed at his own expense, a pamphlet in the interest of the movement, 1831.
- b. Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society.
- c. Editor of the *Pennsylvania Freeman*.
- d. "Poems on Slavery" written and published.

3. Home at Amesbury.

- a. His sister Elizabeth his only mistress.
- b. Simple and abstemious habits enforced by continued ill health.
- c. Numerous friends always welcome.

4. Great works.

- a. "Snow-Bound," the American "Cotter's Saturday Night."
- b. "Tent on the Beach."

(1) Fields, Bayard Taylor and himself described in the introduction.

(2) Like Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" and Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn."

- c. "Among the Hills."
- d. "Last Walk in Autumn."
- e. "Prayer of Agassiz."
- f. Religious Poems.

(1) "My Psalm."

(2) "My Soul and I."

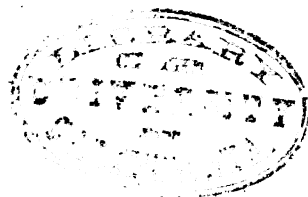
(3) "The Eternal Goodness."

g. Ballads.

(1) "The Witch's Daughter."

(2) "Skipper Ireson's Ride."

(3) "Telling the Bees."





HOLMES

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

"If any reader (and at times we fear it is the case with all) needs amusement, and the wholesome alternative of a hearty laugh, we commend him not to Dr. Holmes the physician, but to Dr. Holmes the scholar, the wit, and the humorist; not to the scientific medical professor's barbarous Latin, but to his poetical prescriptions, given in choice old Saxon. We have tried them, and are ready to give the doctor certificates of their efficacy."

— *Whittier.*

"There's Holmes, who is matchless among you for wit,
A Leyden-jar always full-charged, from which flit
The electrical tingles of hit after hit.

His are just the fine hands, too, to weave you a lyric,
Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced with saffric,
In a measure so kindly you doubt if the toes
That are trodden upon are your own or your foe's "

— *Lowell.*

When that little coterie of Boston's literary men gathered, in the fall of 1857, to found a magazine which should voice the sentiment of a freedom-loving country on subjects political and literary, Lowell was appointed editor-in-chief. In accepting the honor, he said that Dr. Holmes would have been a much wiser selection, and then and there an agreement was made that Holmes should be a regular contributor to the new magazine. "Depend upon it," said Lowell, "Dr.

Holmes will be our most effective writer. He is to do something that will be felt. He will be a new power in letters." Time has more than justified this prophecy, for much as the *Atlantic* owes to its illustrious editor and its other able contributors, it is safe to say that the greatest factor in the success of that magazine was the work of Oliver Wendell Holmes. Already well established as a polished writer of poetry, it now remained for him to open up a new field in which prose should lead and poetry follow — prose the foundation, poetry the embellishment — and so began the famous "Breakfast Table Series," the greatest glory of the *Atlantic* during its career of nearly forty years.

In taking up the life and work of this author, we begin the study of the most distinctively humorous of the American writers we have so far considered. In him we find almost constantly the genial wine of humor with only now and then the unsoftened sting of wit. The iron of sorrow and disappointment had never entered his soul, as has been too frequently the case with our English humorists. He sings and talks serenely from a past of success, of comfort, and of joy, looking forward to a future "with promises as sweet."

Until 1884, an old gambrel-roofed house stood

fronting the north side of the square containing the buildings of Harvard College. This old house had stood for more than a century and a half, asserting, like many another colonial mansion, that our Puritan fathers built their homes strong in every part, to withstand the rude usage of the elements. The old house had seen much history; it had, in fact, been an integral part of some of it, for at the breaking out of the Revolution it was the headquarters of General Ward, and in one of its rooms was planned the defence of Bunker Hill. It had heard, across the River Charles, the tumult of the Boston Massacre, when the March snow was first stained with the blood of the New England patriots; it had seen the British march all boastful to Lexington and Concord; if it did not see the lantern hung in the old North Church, it had resounded to the distant sounds of Paul Revere's steed as he fled through the night on his errand of warning "to every Middlesex village and farm;" it had seen Washington take command of our little army under that old elm just in sight; it had seen Cambridge grow from the merest village, with open commons all around, where could be heard the tinkle of the cow-bell and where grew the most luscious wild berries; it had watched the college buildings increase in number and beauty until their

spires cast a shadow on its own old-fashioned homeliness; it had beheld us triumphant in a great war for existence, and its gray old walls had seemed to smile as appreciating men reared Memorial Hall to tell, with its finger-pointing spires, whither had fled the souls of the many sons of Harvard who had fought and died in the great cause; it had heard of our rejoicing at our hundredth birthday; and still it stood, a dumb oracle to the thoughtless, but full of memories for the reflective. In the march of improvement, however, it was consigned to destruction, and so like a person was it, that it seemed to *die*, not to be torn down.

In 1807, to this old house came the minister of the "First Church in Cambridge," Abiel Holmes, and his wife, and here, Aug. 29, 1809, Oliver Wendell Holmes was born, just one hundred years, as he records, after Dr. Johnson was born in England. There were three older children than our poet, and his brother John was younger. Holmes' idea of a "man of family," as described in the "Autocrat," seems to be perfectly illustrated by his own case, for his ancestors on both sides were people of note, and many of them men and women of real genius. It almost seems as if the elements had been gathering for generations which were to form our genial Autocrat. The father was a learned man, of high intellectual qualities, a student

and writer, and a pastor faithful in all his duties. Though of strong orthodox belief, he was tolerant towards his friends of more liberal doctrines, and in every way a lovable character.

His mother was Sarah Wendell, the daughter of Hon. Oliver Wendell, a man of considerable distinction, and of Mary Jackson, the daughter of Dorothy Quincy. Thus we see that Holmes was great-grandson to the lady of his poem, "Dorothy Q." The Wendells were of Dutch descent and came from New York to Boston in early times. They seem to have been people of wealth, for one of them, Jacob Wendell, purchased twenty-four thousand acres of land in western Massachusetts, on a portion of which Pittsfield now stands, and from which the poet inherited enough to make him a comfortable summer home for several years. What is more interesting than this is that Holmes counted among his ancestors Anne Bradstreet, the peculiar, though gifted poet of early New England, to whom the settlers, who had time to read her pedantic verses, gave the name of the "Tenth Muse lately sprung up in America." The father of Anne was "a Puritan, tough to the core," who, notwithstanding his labors as governor of the colony, and his religious rigor, sometimes unbent himself and poured forth his soul in forbidden poetry. May we not trace

elements to be found in the genius and character of Holmes to these distant sources as well as to the father and mother under whose wise guidance he grew to manhood?

The old house in which the family grew up was abundantly supplied with books, and if there is anything in the Autocrat's idea that it is beneficial for a child to tumble among books, he himself must have caught something of his spirit in this way. Perhaps a comparison of the libraries to which Whittier and Holmes each had access during boyhood, might account for the distinctive flavor of each of their works—the one strong with the odor of woods and flowers, the other savoring always of books and learning.

Living in Cambridge in the early decades of this century was quite like living in the country—open fields everywhere, so that Holmes and his brothers and sisters, while they enjoyed the privileges of a cultivated home within, had out of doors all the liberty of boys and girls in the country. He never tires of telling us of the joys and pranks of these boyhood days. The childhood home, with its father and mother, who lived to a ripe old age, with its sisters and brother, was always to Holmes "the centre of the Universe," the Mecca of his manhood orisons.

After finishing his preparation for college at Phillips Academy at Andover, he entered Harvard at the age of sixteen and graduated with the class of 1829. Who does not know this class? Very few, I think, and principally because Holmes has immortalized it in his yearly poems read at their annual gatherings. This treat was always in store for the "Boys of '29" — a poem always appropriate, nearly always cheerful, but sometimes sad, for the "boys" dropped off one by one, leaving vacant places and aching hearts :

"It's awful to think of — how year after year,
With his piece in his pocket he waits for you here;
No matter who's missing, there always is one
To lug out his manuscript, sure as a gun.
'Why don't he stop writing?' Humanity cries;
The answer is briefly, 'He can't if he tries,
He has played with his foolish old feather so long,
That the goose-quill in spite of him cackles in song.'"

The poems read on these occasions would make an interesting volume by themselves, for they include some of his best work. While in college he had written some excellent poems, such as "Old Ironsides," "My Aunt," "The Last Leaf," "The Organ-Grinders."

After leaving college he seems to have been uncertain which profession to take up as a life work, for we find him studying law the first year, and then turning

to medicine, in which he perfected himself, and where he won distinction entirely outside of his literary work. He studied in Paris and London for three years and returned to take his medical degree at Harvard. For a year he was professor of Anatomy at Dartmouth College, but he could not remain away from his native air of Boston, and in 1840 we find him married and settled as a practising physician in his loved city. He became very learned in his profession, and was constantly lecturing and writing upon subjects connected with it. He exposed many evils of practice, and was foremost in a crusade against giving so much medicine. He advised to take out a few of the leading drugs and specifics and then throw the rest overboard, adding with characteristic humor, "It would be all the better for mankind, and all the worse for the fishes." In his long experience among students he was always a great favorite, owing to the interest he infused into the driest subjects when lecturing upon them. In 1847 he was appointed professor of Anatomy at Harvard, and for many years kept up his connection with the college.

In his practice he must have been a jolly doctor, and many imaginary ills must have been forgotten and real ones mitigated in the sunshine of his smile and kindly words. The positions of humorous poet and

physician seem hardly compatible in the same person, but Holmes made a striking success of both. Perhaps the glow of the one softened the hardness of the other; perhaps that is one reason his humor is so often closely followed by lines of the most exquisite pathos.

In 1840, he was married to Amelia Lee Jackson, a daughter of one of the justices of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. Three children, two boys and one girl, came of this marriage. One of them, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., will be remembered "as the Captain" in the article published in the *Atlantic* during the War, "My Hunt after the Captain." The young man was three times wounded and the anxiety of the family was very great.

For eighteen years the family lived in Montgomery Place, then a more fashionable residence section than now. He writes thus of this home:—"When he entered that door, two shadows glided over the threshold; five lingered in the doorway when he passed through it for the last time; and one of the shadows was claimed by its owner to be longer than his own. What changes he saw in that place! Death rained through every roof but his: children came into life, grew into maturity, wedded, faded away, threw themselves away; the whole drama of life was

played in that stock company's theatre of a dozen houses, one of which was his, and no deep sorrow or severe calamity ever entered his dwelling. Peace be to those walls forever for the many pleasant years he passed in them."

In his poem, "The Old Man Dreams," he wishes for boyhood again, but ere the angel makes the desired change he begs for his darling wife and his boys and girls. The angel turns away, "for a boy cannot be a husband and a father, too "

The next twelve years of their lives were spent in a residence on Charles Street. This home is interesting as opening upon the Charles River, where the boats were moored in which every reader of the "Autocrat" must be interested. From this place, Holmes moved to his last residence on Beacon Street, a home such as only refined taste and wealth can furnish. This, too, commanded an extensive view of the estuary of the Charles and of the college buildings beyond. The river here feels the throb of the ocean, and birds of the sea are always hovering about, which may in a way account for the poem, "My Aviary," Comfort and elegance characterized this residence, and Dr. Homes enjoyed it very much, for he was a great home body. "Mankind," he says, "have many roosts, but only one nest."

If we could stand beside the Autocrat's writing desk in his cheerful library, not the least of the many interesting objects which would greet us, would be an old oil-painting, by the great doors, of Dorothy Quincy. It showed the marks of time and of violence, but it was one of the poet's most valued possessions.

“Grandmother's mother, her age, I guess,
Thirteen summers, or something less;
Girlish bust, but womanly air,
Smooth, square forehead, and up-rolled hair,
Lips that lover has never kissed,
Taper fingers and slender waist,
Hanging sleeves of stiff brocade,
So they painted the little maid.”

In his home he was fond of good cheer and of good company, and he had his share of both. The mention of the friends of Dr. Holmes brings to mind the Atlantic Club. What discourse and mirth mingled at those incomparable meetings! How Holmes' and Lowell's wit sparkled! How benignly Emerson smiled, and how Longfellow enjoyed it all, how Agassiz forgot everything else when telling with childlike simplicity, the story of the rocks, the birds, and fishes! How Fields glowed, as he told of some newly discovered genius, or Felton, as he warmed with ardor over the beauty of the Greeks and their work! What service a magic pen might do, could it but reproduce those conversations, alas! now gone

forever, hushed in night, like the brilliant men who enjoyed them.

Besides the homes already mentioned, our author built a summer residence at Pittsfield, of which he speaks as "that home where seven blessed summers were passed, which stand in memory like the seven golden candlesticks in the beautiful vision of the holy dreamer."

For a number of years Holmes was in great demand as a lecturer, but he never wholly enjoyed the business. Some of his best poems, such as the one on Wordsworth, were written as prologues to lectures on the poets, in which he showed ability so marked, that we make no mistake when we rank him high among critics in addition to his other positions. Some of his demands in his lecture trips were peculiar. He would not stay at a private house, but demanded a warm room at a hotel, with a mattress to sleep on instead of a feather bed. The price he set on his labors was certainly not high. Fifteen dollars an evening and expenses where he had to stay over night. In the "Autocrat," an interesting account of his lecturing experiences is given by the landlady: "Pretty nigh killed himself goin' about lecturin' two or three winters; takin' in cold country lyceums, as he used to say, goin' home to cold parlors, and bein' treated to

cold apples and cold water, and then goin' up into a cold bed in a cold room, and comin' home next mornin' with a cold in his head as bad as a horse distemper. . . . He preferred nateral death to puttin' himself out of the world by such violent means as lecturin'."

Holmes was already famous as a poet when his Autocrat Series was begun in the *Atlantic*. He had written many of his greatest poems. "Old Ironsides," in particular, had created a great stir. It had been called out by the proposition of Congress to destroy the frigate *Constitution*, which had outlived its usefulness. A large part of the nation, with Holmes, felt that such wanton destruction of a faithful old servant was uncalled for, and showed a lack of national sentiment. Speeches and newspaper articles were launched against the party for destruction, but without effect. Finally, this poem, which had been written some time before, was printed in the papers, circulated on handbills, and recited everywhere. It did the work which vehement prose and eloquence had failed to do.

The old frigate was preserved as a school ship, attached to the naval academy at Annapolis. During the Centennial she lay in the Delaware, where she held a reception, as it were, for people enjoyed seeing the old ship which had done so much to make our

hundredth anniversary one of rejoicing. She has since braved the storms of the Atlantic, and was later doing good service in the navy yard at Portsmouth.

Holmes has more than any other poet written for occasions. This is what he says of these demands upon him ;

“ Here’s the cousin of a king,
Would I do the civil thing?
Here’s the first-born of a queen,
Here’s a slant-eyed Mandarin.
Would I polish off Japan?
Would I greet this famous man,
Prince or Prelate, Sheik or Shah?
Would I just this once comply?
So they teased and teased till I
(Be the truth at once confessed)
Wavered, yielded, did my best.”

So apt have been these poems that he has almost proved the statement untrue that “poems cannot be made to order.”

There are many charms to the poetry of Holmes, a delightful informality and simplicity of language, perfect music of versification, and the most delightful humor and exquisite pathos so near together as to almost jostle each other ; in one stanza you are convulsed with laughter, the next fills your eyes with tears. His subjects, too, are such as only a true poet would select. Topics from New England and national history have often employed his pen, and in

such a way that old and young may profit equally from the work accomplished; the one for the sentiment and the other for the facts. Though he does little with out-door nature, we do not miss it in the profusion of human nature displayed.

Many of his choicest poems are woven into the pages of his prose. For example, "The Chambered Nautilus," that poem "booked for immortality," as Whittier says, is found in the early part of the "Autocrat at the Breakfast Table," as is also the one "The Old Man Dreams."

This brings us to the prose works of our author and their peculiar character. Holmes says, "Every man is his own Boswell," and he is an excellent illustration of his own statement. There is good proof, too, that this was intentional, for he records his pleasure in consulting Boswell's "Life of Johnson" to find what his contemporary of the last century, as he calls the burly old Doctor, was doing at this age, or that. He tells us what a loss he feels when 1884 comes, and he can no longer compare his own with Johnson's life, for just a century before, that great light had gone out in England. "Yes, my life is a little less precious to me since I have lost that dear old friend; and when the funeral train moves to Westminster Abbey next Saturday — for I feel as if this were 1784, and not

1884—I seem to find myself following the hearse, one of the silent mourners.”

The frame-work of “The Autocrat”—and likewise of the two later works, “The Poet” and “The Professor”—was entirely new. In a boarding-house the “boarders” are gathered at the breakfast table. They are of many callings, as would naturally be the case, and among them are the landlady and her daughter. The Autocrat is, of course, the absorbing character, but a remark now and then from the other members of the table often relieves or heightens the effect of what he is saying. Of the series, this one will always be the favorite, for it is more adapted to the capacity of the ordinary mind than the others, which, as later works, naturally partook more and more of the learning which was constantly accumulating in a life like that of Holmes.

Sometimes we find a crotchety critic who complains of the egotism of Holmes. Our author does talk much of himself, but he does it in such a delightful way, calling up whole lines of events of general interest, that we forgive him before we begin, and when we have finished, we call for more.

Besides the prose referred to, Holmes has written many other essays, mostly for the *Atlantic*, and they are not unworthy the Autocrat, the Professor, or the

Poet. His stories, "Elsie Venner" and "Guardian Angel," though not among the greatest of novels, will always command readers on account of the many excellent bits of New England life and character there set down.

Personally, Dr. Holmes was a little under medium height, but, with his silk hat and cane, he hardly looked short. He was quick and nervous in speech and action, and his eyes and face had a remarkable power of lighting up when he was interested. As a young man, he was like Longfellow, a little of an exquisite in dress, and was always neat and careful in his attire. He was exceedingly fond of the country, though he loved the city, too. Fond of out-door exercise, he never enjoyed it more than when he could cull the wild-flowers and sniff their fragrance. True to everything New England, he loved especially her arbutus, that pink trailer of the spring-warmed woods. In religion, he was a Unitarian of the broadest type. The doctrines of his father he left with his childhood memories.

QUESTIONS ON HOLMES.

- Name some of the men who gathered to found the *Atlantic*?
Who was appointed editor-in-chief?
What did he say of Holmes as a contributor to the new magazine?
How well did Holmes fulfill this prophecy?
When and where was Holmes born?
How was he related to Dorothy Q?
From what poet of colonial times was Holmes also descended?
What were some of the privileges enjoyed by Holmes and his brothers and sisters as children?
To what class in Harvard did Holmes belong?
How has he immortalized the class?
What profession did he adopt and what has he done to improve that profession?
Speak of his marriage and children.
Which child figures in "My Hunt after the Captain"?
What can you tell of the different homes of the poet?
What are some striking points in his personality?
Describe fully the "Autocrat at the Breakfast Table."
What other books in the Breakfast Table Series?
What occasioned the writing of "Old Ironsides"?
Name other poems written by Holmes.
What novels has Holmes written?
What is his latest work?
What great Englishman does he call his contemporary of the last century?

SUBJECTS FOR LANGUAGE WORK.

1. Holmes as a Humorist.
2. Holmes the Poet of Occasions.
3. The Autocrat at the Breakfast Table.
4. Portraits from the Poems of Holmes.
5. The History of "Old Ironsides."
6. The Class Poems of Holmes.
7. Holmes as a Lecturer.
8. The Old Holmes House in Cambridge.

OUTLINE FOR LIFE OF HOLMES.

- I. Birth at Cambridge, Mass., Aug. 29, 1809.
 - 1. Father an Orthodox minister.
 - 2. Mother a granddaughter of Dorothy Q.
 - 3. A descendant of Anne Bradstreet.
- II. Childhood.
 - 1. Full of pranks in rural Cambridge.
 - 2. Enjoyed a cultivated home — its books and even its discipline.
- III. Youth.
 - 1. Prepared for college at Phillips Academy at Andover.
 - 2. Member of the class of '29 at Harvard.
- IV. Manhood.
 - 1. Adopts the medical profession.
 - a. Preparation.
 - (1) Studies at Harvard.
 - (2) Studies three years in London and Paris.
 - b. Career in the profession.
 - (1) A successful practitioner in Boston.
 - (2) A lecturer at Dartmouth and Harvard.
 - (3) A reformer of old methods.
 - 2. Marriage to Amelia Lee Jackson, 1840.
 - a. Three children, two sons and a daughter.
 - b. Oliver Wendell, Jr., the Captain in "My Hunt after the Captain."
 - 3. Holmes as a lecturer.
 - a. Lectures largely critical in matter, usually preceded by a poem.
 - b. Not fond of the business.
 - 4. As a novelist.
 - "Elsie Venner" and "Guardian Angel."
 - 5. Latest works.
 - a. "One Hundred Days in Europe," the result of his last trip to Europe.
 - b. "Over the Tea-cups."

6. Interesting points in his personality.
 - a. Small in stature.
 - b. Exquisitely neat in dress.
 - c. Exceedingly fond of Boston.
 - d. A Unitarian of the broadest type.
 - e. Fond of Dr. Johnson, whom he calls his contemporary of the last century.
7. Death, October 7, 1894.





ALICE CARY.

ALICE AND PHŒBE CARY.

Among the women who have graced American thoughtful life, none stand higher than Alice and Phœbe Cary, not only for what they attained, but for the struggle which they made against ill health, sorrow, and limited means, to gain their place of independence.

Alice, the older, was born April 26th, 1820, and Phœbe saw the light four years later. They were both born on a farm a few miles from Cincinnati, where their father and mother had toiled hard for years and where they were doomed to more toil yet, the mother, alas! to die at her unfinished task. In their writings, both women give vivid pictures of their early home, for whatever prosperity came to them in later life, they always delighted in their recollections of this home—the old weather-beaten house with the sweet-brier under the window, with old-fashioned flowers bordering the walk, and the thrifty apple and cherry trees that shaded the yard.

The Cary's were undoubtedly of noble origin, though there is a question as to just the line of descent. In the heraldic records we find Sir Robert Cary, in the

reign of Henry V., conquering the Knight of Aragon in single combat, and then, according to the custom in vogue, assuming the arms of his conquered foe. Of this, Phœbe Cary was very proud, and nothing vexed her more than the expression of a doubt concerning this picturesque little incident, though really and truly, she herself, with her wit, her talent, her perseverance, was more credit to the Cary name than many knights of Aragon, real as life. After all it is only a natural feeling — we all like to be well born, and most of us, too, would prize a coat of arms as she did, and perhaps, too, keep it framed in a conspicuous place in the library.

Whatever be true of the Knight of Aragon, the first Cary's in this country were Huguenots, and came here for religious freedom a little after the Pilgrims came in the Mayflower. They settled a short distance from Plymouth Rock and there founded a home and a family, the members of which were more or less prominent in local affairs for several generations.

Thomas Cary, the first of the family who settled in America, was well educated. He taught the first Latin class in Plymouth, and held offices of trust in the colony. Among these early Carys there were scholars and eminent professional men. We are, however, most interested in the grandfather of the

women we are studying, Christopher Cary, who fought in the War for Independence, and when it was done, being unable to get pay for his services in money, he accepted a tract of land in the Miami Valley, in Ohio. A part of this tract Alice Cary has made famous as the Clovernook of her stories and sketches, for Robert, her father, came West with his father at the age of fifteen. Thus early began the toil which was so unremitting that it left little time to cultivate the fine nature that was naturally his. His heart seemed overflowing with poetry and with love for the dumb animals, as well as for his family and friends. From him Alice inherited not only her dark hair and eyes, but much of her genius and temperament as well.

The mother of the Cary Sisters was blue-eyed and beautiful, and of superior intellect. Here is her portrait drawn by Alice in her "Order for a Picture":—

"A lady the loveliest ever the sun
Looked down upon, you must paint for me:
Oh, if I could only make you see
The clear blue eyes, the tender smile,
The sovereign sweetness, the gentle grace,
The woman's soul, and the angel's face
That are beaming on me all the while,
I need not speak these foolish words:
Yet one word tells you all I would say,
She is my mother."

She was a hard worker, for she did the work of her

household, with its nine children, with her own hands, except the little they could help her. No wonder her health failed and she left her young family just when they needed her most, especially the girls who pined so for the sympathy and encouragement which only a mother can give.

Alice was fourth of this family and she says the greatest joys of her life were the companionship of her elder sister, Rhoda, and the care of her youngest sister, Lucy. She was only fourteen when they both died within a month of each other. Alice always claimed that Rhoda was the most gifted of the family. Lucy, though only three when she died, was throughout life a great influence to Alice—she was indeed her “deathless little one.” To her last hours Alice recalled with delight the stories Rhoda used to tell her on their way home from school. The school-house was a mile and a quarter away and the children walked to and from it. This would seem to give ample time for story-telling but these sisters often loitered after the house appeared in sight to finish the career of some imaginary hero or heroine whose fate Alice was too anxious to hear.

From this school and from a dozen books or so at home these women obtained the school education that lighted them through life. They loved out-door life,

however, and so their education did not stop here; there was inspiration to them in the song of a bird, in the blush of a rose, in the pallor of a lily, in the odor of the clover, in the gurgling of a stream, in the ripple of great fields of waving grain in the morning sun,—in all these things there was inspiration which produced songs so sweet in their thought, and so rythmetical in their versification, that we read and re-read in our vain effort to lengthen out the exquisite music.

Shortly after the death of the sisters referred to above, the mother, too, sickened and died. For two years Alice and Phœbe kept house for their father, and then he married again. The woman was about his own age and a widow—a person who seemed adapted to the place she was to occupy in this household. But while she cared for the physical wants of those under her care and kept a tidy house, she lacked that cast of mind which would have enabled her to sympathize with these sisters in their literary pursuits. She looked upon time spent in reading as utterly lost, and even begrudged the candles consumed, so the girls resorted to a saucer of lard with a rag in it, as a substitute. The point calls to mind another girl, an English girl of the last century also destined to become famous, who likewise wasted precious candles

in writing nonsense, so said the economical step-mother, when Fanny Burney was writing on the sly, the chapters of her matchless society novel, "Evelina." What strange thoughts must these over careful mothers have had when the so-called nonsense of their girls brought not only fame but money as well!

In spite of difficulties, however, the sisters wrote on, though their productions found no other medium than the papers of the Universalist faith, the doctrines of which denomination had early attracted the father and mother of this family. Alice adhered to this faith through life, though with a catholicity that admitted dear friends of other and diverse forms of belief. They wrote for years asking no other recompense than to be read. Horace Greeley refers to this as good preparation for their New York work, for, while little or no money had been paid them for their work, when they made their way to the city in 1850, they had made themselves *known*, and there was money value in that.

The first money Alice Cary ever received for her verses was from the *National Era*, a Washington paper, for which she regularly wrote poetry. There was, however, some recompense even when no money came, for Phoebe tells us that when she first saw her lines in print there was a thrill of delight never since

occasioned by the sight of money. Others might be rich and beautifully clad, learned, and surrounded by friends, but she could write words that men and women were glad to read—that was joy enough for her!

As the family was more or less disturbed, they separated—the three girls, Alice, Phœbe and Elmina occupied the old house, and the father built a new one for the remainder of the family. Here began that home life which is such a characteristic part of these women. In 1849, the sisters gathered their poems together and had them published by a Philadelphia house. For this little volume they received one hundred dollars, but more than the money was the encouragement that was extended them by distant friends.

The next year they set out to meet face to face those who had sent their kindly greeting to them. Among the first they visited was Whittier, whom they sought out at his home in Amesbury. They were kindly received by the "Quaker Poet." Who has not read his sweet poem "The Singer" which records his impressions of these women, especially of Alice? Lasting impressions they must have been for they were not put on paper for twenty years, when Alice's death gave occasion for writing this beautiful poem.

They were now writing quite steadily for papers and magazines, and now and then some interested reader found his way to their western home. Such a one was Horace Greeley, who sought them out and began an intimacy which lasted as long as these women lived, and was prolonged, so to speak, by the delightful memories which "our later Franklin" carried with him when they were no more.

Elmina's marriage to a Cincinnati merchant decided the other two girls to seek their fortunes in New York City. It was a great risk for these two women alone, and one of them, at least, much broken in health, to venture into this great city to earn a living by the pen. They were, however, industrious, economical, full of common sense and with the hatred of debt rooted deep in their natures. They had accumulated a little money, and had above all made for themselves a name, so that their productions sold well. When they reached New York, instead of settling into oblivion and gloom of a city boarding-house, they started a home — plain to be sure, and up two flights of stairs, but neat and comfortable, pervaded by the spirit of those who presided over it. Here they soon gathered about them a large circle of writers, artists, and men and women interested in the stirring events of those stormy times.

Their work prospered and they were soon able to move into the pleasant home on Twentieth Street, where for more than fifteen years they lived, and wrote, and entertained their friends. The taste displayed in this home and the beautiful things here gathered together were delightful to contemplate, and helped to compensate for the dreariness and lack of beauty in their early years. Alice, especially, was always on the alert for opportunities to buy such rare things as came within her means. That exquisite inlaid table there in the drawing-room with its border of pansies so perfect in form and color, the work of a life time almost, was watched long and lovingly by her before she really decided to make it a part of their home. Here are beautiful vases, and the rooms are filled with pictures, all good, and many recalling the hallowed sights and sounds of rural life. No wonder that this was considered the sunniest drawing-room by day or night in the whole city! Who that ever took a cup of tea with them can forget the delicacy of the china or of the viands served therefrom? The library, too, was just such a nook, as one would expect, filled with the books long coveted by these aspiring women. If we go to the rooms these women more particularly called their own, we find the most womanly taste displayed. The exquisite

lace of the pillow cases, and the dressers in perfect order and in harmony with those who used them, the orderly writing desks, though it must be confessed Phœbe's carried off the palm in this regard — covered with papers indicating the ever busy life of the owners; everything about them tended to show the *woman* even more than the genius of those to whom all this was due.

In this home Alice was the leader and manager, though Phœbe was equally valuable in her place. It was Alice who did the marketing, who managed the servants, and planned the meals. Over the needle Phœbe was absolute master, and nothing brought Alice sooner to a place of supplication than some little bit of sewing which she wished done, as Phœbe's skilled fingers only could do it; then the young sister reigned supreme, enjoying the helplessness of Alice, usually her superior. This supervision of the household Alice continued until her health gave way entirely, when the task fell to Phœbe.

They were both inveterate workers, and yet Phœbe would fly away once in a while and enjoy her distant friends. Not so with Alice. If she did consent to leave her tasks it was only for a few days then to hurry back to unfinished work. Indeed she came to feel that the burning summer time, filling all the



PHOEBE CARY.

streets with a stifling heat, was her time to work. When her friends were out of town enjoying their vacations, she sat behind closed blinds, guiding the pen which delighted so many and kept up this sweet home. Alas! that what formerly had been a necessity now became a habit. How precious to herself, to her friends, to that dear sister, indeed to all of us would have been a few years more of her woman's life. She felt it when it was too late, and who can read her "Invalid's Plea" and not shed a bitter tear for one "With all things to take and nothing to give," begging so hard to live and enjoy the freshness and beauty she had neglected too long?

Though the sisters always showed each other their writings, read them over together and cried or laughed over them in concert, they never worked together. Phœbe would trip off to her room, and shortly returning, read to Alice a matchless parody or a touching ballad from her neat manuscript. Alice with tears lingering in her eyes, and the quiver hardly gone from her lip would in turn read one of her moving poems recalling scenes from their childhood, or perhaps fathoming the mystery of the coming life. A picture well worth cherishing is the one of this sweet womanly intercourse. No wonder when the elder had entered the spirit land, the

younger had no motive to live, and, though she tried to be brave as that elder one would wish her to be, was drawn by an invisible chord until she, too, departed within a few months of her sister's death.

In this home there had been joy and sorrow, too. To the former must belong those rare Sunday evenings, when the Cary drawing-room was thrown open for the informal reception of friends and kindred spirits who came together to discuss the latest news in literature, art or music. Many who are known among famous people frequented these gatherings — Horace Greeley, Bayard Taylor, Edwin Whipple, the Stoddards, and numerous others came and went away gladdened. In these assemblies Phœbe's wit sparkled and the magnetism of Alice always furnished a drawing center. These rooms where had gathered brilliant people in happy converse had resounded to the hurried feet of anxious watchers at the side of Elmina's sick bed, and later on were hushed as the gloomy concourse formed and she was borne to her place in beautiful Greenwood, where she was to be followed by those who had so lovingly watched her declining years. Consumption was the blight of this family, and in the long years it did its deadly work completely. Alice says that for thirty years their house was never free from that dreadful cough.

The works of these women were as diverse as were their temperaments. Alice wrote more and better than her sister, though the latter had a vein of humor almost foreign to Alice. Her sparkling wit was the delight of the tea table, as it was of those who read her humorous poems. Her hymns, too, rank very high. Who does not know and enjoy the one beginning

“One sweetly solemn thought,
Comes to me o'er and o'er”?

This hymn has brought happiness to many souls all over the world, and we glow to-day as its sweet notes rise from the worshipping congregation. Phoebe Cary's hymns were like herself — fervent, devoted, — and they find an echo in the religious soul.

In Alice's poems there is always an undertone of sadness, born of her own sorrows. For this she was often criticised, and yet she rose high above it in many of her works. So simple, forceful, direct is she as a ballad writer that she ranks first among those Americans who have produced ballads. Some of her poems, such as “Pictures from Memory” will last as long as the language in which they are written, for they speak to the *heart* of the people. Edgar Allan Poe pronounced this one of the most musically perfect poems in the language.

Alice not only wrote poetry, but after coming to New York she produced her "Clovernook Papers," in two series, which were widely read in England and America. "Clovernook Children" followed and were equally successful among younger readers. This reminds us to speak of the fondness of both these women for children and of the poems they wrote for their amusement. Many were the happy parties of little folks that cheered from time to time their quiet home, and a great gathering would it be indeed could all the children be drawn together who have enjoyed the verses of these good women.

It was in the winter of 1869 and '70 that Alice Cary had to give up most of her wonted duties and become a confirmed invalid, seldom leaving her room and never save on crutches. She still received her friends, and talked with them of their plans of life, even when the pain that was killing her was at its height. Still the Sunday evenings were enjoyed, though she who made all that enjoyment possible was unable to mingle in that pleasant company save in thought, as she listened from her invalid's room above. Brave she was, but often those who loved her best found the tears undried on her cheeks at the close of one of those evenings, for no one can express the desire she had to live. The last summer she

consented to leave the city to spend some time at Northampton. Here she wrote her "Invalid's Plea," and here she discovered, too late, what change and recreation might have done for her. She returned to the New York home to suffer yet more and then to die before the birds and flowers of another spring should appear. Her suffering had turned her dark hair gray and had stolen the rose from her cheek, but her wonderful eyes were the same to the last — dark, lustrous, far-seeing — the eyes of a poet. The faithful hand, too, held the pen almost to the very end, recording the sweet religious spirit that had controlled her through life. Her last stanza tells the story of what she sought and, may we have faith to believe, found :—

" As the poor panting hart to the water-brook runs,
As the water-brook runs to the sea,
So earth's fainting daughters and famishing sons,
O Fountain of Love, run to Thee!"

It was February when she died, and the day they buried her one of those softly-sliding heavy snow storms hushed the city from morn till night, as if nature would silence the sounds of men while a great soul was passing.

After an impressive service including the singing of Phœbe Cary's hymn. "Nearer Home," they laid her to

rest beside her sister, in Greenwood. Our hearts go out in deepest sympathy to that lone sister left in the home on Twentieth Street. She went back and did what she felt Alice would have had her do—she threw open the windows to let in the sunshine, she put flowers on the mantels, and spoke a cheerful word to the anxious friends who called. There was no use, however, a part of her life had gone out and she could not stay without it. In less than six months she died almost alone, for few knew of her illness until it was too late. One of her last utterances made to her servant is pathetic enough. "You and I are all alone Maria. After all I have nobody left but you." She died at Newport but she was brought home to rest beside those other two in that beautiful cemetery with the roaring city on one side and the sounding sea on the other.



QUESTIONS ON ALICE AND PHŒBE CARY.

What can you say of the origin of the Carys?

What is a coat of arms, and what was the one of which Phœbe Cary was so proud?

Speak of the early history of the family in this country.

Describe the life of the Cary sisters while living in Ohio.

How did the father influence the children?

The mother?

In what poem of Alice's do we find a faithful picture of the mother?

Where was Clovernook?

What are some of the things which made the life of these women sad?

What literary preparation did they have before going to New York?

Who were some of their friends in the city?

Speak fully of their home life here.

Of their social life.

What are some of the marked differences between these two women?

Name some poems by each, showing these differences.

Which died first and what was the cause of her ill health?

Locate and describe the cemetery where both lie buried.

SUBJECTS FOR LANGUAGE WORK.

An evening with the Cary Sisters.

Whittier, the Friend of the Cary Sisters.

Phœbe Cary, the writer of Hymns,

Two Sisters, (A character sketch.)

Horace Greeley, a Guest at the Cary Sisters.

OUTLINE FOR ALICE AND PHŒBE CARY.

- I. Early life — one of struggle and privation.
 1. Family of noble origin — coat of arms.
 - a. Early history in this country, in New England and Ohio.
 - b. Respective influence of father and mother.
 - c. Alice and Phœbe members of a large family of boys and girls.
 2. Meagre schooling.
 3. Death of mother, an unusual loss to Alice and Phœbe.
 4. Early attempts at writing — limited circulation and little pay.
- II. Life in New York City.
 1. Circumstances of their leaving the country for the city.
 2. A home established in the city.
 3. Their friends — Sunday evening receptions.
 4. Great prosperity, the result of
 - a. Wide acquaintance through their former writings.
 - b. Untiring industry and wise economy.
 5. The sisters distinguished with regard to
 - a. Genius.
 - b. Personal habits and appearance.
 6. Alice overworked — finds too late the value of periodic rest.
Death and burial in Greenwood Cemetery.
 7. Death of Phœbe, six months later.
- III. Notable works by
 1. Alice.
 - a. Stories for children, "Clovernook Stories,"
 - b. Poems, "Order for a Picture," "Pictures from Memory."
 2. Phœbe.
 - a. Ballads and Parodies — "Kate Ketchum."
 - b. Hymns — "One sweetly, solemn thought," etc.



LOUISA M. ALCOTT.

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT.

If one were studying the heraldic emblems of the seventeenth century, there is one coat-of-arms which would certainly attract his attention, not only on account of the peculiar device but for the name it adorns as well. The device is that of three cocks, all with heads up as if they mistrusted a hawk near by, and underneath in Latin, the words, "Always Watchful." Quite in harmony with the design the name is *Alcocke*, the form in which our American name of Alcott first appeared.

There are many reasons why Americans in particular would be interested in this bit of old-time pictorial history, for if we do not know and love A. Bronson Alcott, that modern Plato, walking with his head in the clouds and letting the things of earth take care of themselves, we certainly do know and love his more practical though not less spiritually minded daughter, Louisa May.

On that March day, in 1888, when the loving friends, who had gathered to pay the last honors to the father of this woman, heard, on leaving the house

of mourning, that she, too, had gone to her rest, a deeper gloom fell over them and they began to inquire into a life that had ended, as it seemed, so untimely. Then, for the first time, many realized what a life of self-sacrifice had been her's, and how the demands of heart and brain had drained to the uttermost a temperament naturally robust. On examination, people found that many of her happiest stories were written when physical pain and mental anguish were at their height,—that Aunt Jo in spite of her pranks had carried through life a most tender heart, coupled with a hand generous beyond what it could wisely give.

On the mother's side there was more to be proud of than armorial bearings could express, for in her was mingled the blood of the Quinceys, the Mays, the Sewalls, all famous in the early records of New England, even though the last name is inseparably connected with the witch persecution. The mother was not dependent, however, for real worth upon her ancestors, for in herself she was worthy to be the mother of her famous daughter. She had a good mind, was intelligent, warm-hearted, impulsive, abounding in charity and possessed of the practical sense which her amiable husband wholly lacked. Louisa M. Alcott then, though she had poverty to

contend with, certainly had some recompense in being well born.

She was the second daughter in a family of four girls and she was born on her father's birthday, November 29th, 1832, at Germantown, where her father had charge of a school.

The Alcott family had many homes during the early years of Louisa and consequently her education was desultory. Indeed she says that the only instruction she ever received was from her father or from different tutors lodged now and then in the family. This was not so bad as at first appears, for whatever peculiarities Bronson Alcott may have possessed, as a teacher he was in advance of his times, and used many methods now approved by the best educators.

In 1834, the family moved to Boston, where Alcott opened his famous Temple School. Here Louisa enjoyed running in the Common and making friends with all sorts of children. Once she was lost, and found fast asleep by the town crier. At another time her little career came near being ended by her falling into the frog pond, but she was rescued, more frightened than hurt, by a colored boy.

The school, at first prosperous, was finally reduced to five pupils, three of whom were Alcott's own children and the fourth a negro boy, against whose

presence his aristocratic patrons had objected. In those troublesome times the fact that the family were strong abolitionists did not work for their profit, and yet they adhered strenuously to the growing cause. Louisa recalled in later life many incidents relating to the agitation of the time — a fugitive slave hidden in the great brick oven, the imprisonment of Garrison, and her father's and mother's visit to him in his confinement.

The school having failed, the family moved to Concord in 1840, and there occupied the cottage described in "Little Women" as Meg's first home. This removal to Concord was followed by the whole family going to Fruitlands, a farm in the vicinity of Harvard, Mass., where an experiment, similar to that of Brook Farm in Hawthorne's life, was to be tried by a number of idealists such as Alcott. Here the children had a wholly vegetable diet, as the father claimed that nothing but an even, beautiful temperament could result from such food, even though Louisa often called his attention to her own case to refute this pet theory of his. If you wish for Louisa's common sense view of this socialistic experiment read her "Transcendental Wild Oats."

The plan failed utterly, as such plans must, and the Alcotts returned to Concord, where, owing to the

death of Mrs. Alcott's father, they were able to buy the house called Hillside, later owned and occupied by Hawthorne. Here the children had for playmates the Emersons, the Hawthornes, the Goodwin's; and happy times they had, too, with their cats and their dolls and acting "Pilgrim's Progress" or little plays written by Louisa, who even then found great pleasure in writing and in acting.

It was about this time that she first conceived the idea of going on the stage, and though she early gave up the notion, she never lost her interest in theatrical doings. Indeed she so far carried out her love for acting that she took the part of "Mrs. Jarley" in Dickens' famous story of "Little Nell" so well, that she became noted all over New England in this part, and many came long distances to see Miss Alcott's impersonations of "Mrs. Jarley." This acting she always did for charitable purposes, and she kept it up until she felt she was too old for such nonsense.

Whatever other characteristics the plays built up for the children to act may have had, they certainly were thrilling in the extreme, as titles like the "Bandit's Bride" show. The acting of the tragical parts in these plays usually fell to Louisa, who enjoyed the work and did it with unusual spirit. Whenever the plays in the barn failed or the weather

turned a stormy side, Louisa was still the refuge of this little company, for then she told them beautiful fairy stories, always strongly enforcing some needed moral, for, judging from her own impulsive, moody temperament, she felt that the little band needed training.

Thoreau came often to the house and sometimes helped in the instruction of the children. At this time, too, began the intimate friendship with Emerson which was a help and inspiration to the whole family. To Louisa he became an ideal hero whom she serenaded and to whom she wrote letters that were never sent, after the fashion of one of Goethe's characters. To her father he was more than any other friend, for he believed in him and his philosophic mission, when other people were deriding his ideas. A gift modestly bestowed—a bill under a book or a vase—was always rightly attributed to this friend, and it was often sorely needed, for philosophy seldom brings in much of an income.

Anna and Louisa, the eldest of the children, early felt the pinch of poverty, and saw how it was wearing on their mother who could do so little to lighten the burden, so we find them very soon studying ways and means like the little women they were. The plays in the barn, the fairy tales in the garret, the romps in the woods had to be given up, and the girls devoted

themselves to sewing, teaching, or almost anything that would bring in a little remuneration. The family even moved into Boston in order that Mrs. Alcott could earn something by visiting the poor and later, by opening an intelligence office. In this last work she often took the poor and friendless into her family, and when her friends wondered at her allowing her girls to mingle with such people, she merely said she hoped her girls were strong enough to resist temptation and to help their less fortunate sisters.

Louisa even ventured to fill a place for which her mother could find no suitable person. The position purported to be that of companion to the invalid sister of a minister. Surely she could trust herself in such a position, but bitter was her disappointment when she discovered that the services expected were of the most menial sort, and the woman to be thus served, inferior in every regard. These people who scorned the term *wages*, but who would "amply reward the young woman" gave her at parting, for seven weeks of the hardest drudgery she ever endured, a little purse supposed to contain the "ample reward." Imagine her consternation when she opened it and found *four dollars*! Who can censure the scorn and independence which prompted her to return the sum unbroken to her ministerial patron?

In all this struggle with poverty, Louisa never for a moment let go her determination to be a writer. In this she was helped and encouraged by her mother, who saw that Louisa's journal was kept up and who treasured up any little verses her daughter wrote. Mrs. Alcott had the habit, too, of reprimanding or praising her children by writing them little notes and pinning them to their pillows. To Louisa, whose tongue was impulsive and whose temper was stubborn, these notes came oftenest. They frequently called for answers, which were likewise written, and so in times, apparently too busy for writing, there was good exercise in the art, even without counting the early stories Louisa could not help writing by herself in the garret.

Even these last had been improving, for the Christmas gift to her mother in 1854 was a volume of her "Flower Fables." Sixteen hundred of these were printed and they sold well, though the writer received but thirty-two dollars for the work. Nothing discouraged the young woman, however, and she wrote with renewed energy the stories for which she received five, ten, and twenty dollars—"pot boilers," she called them. These small sums were welcome money indeed, and it was with pride that she "made the inside of crazy Louisa's head" keep the feet of

the family warm, when she bought them a new carpet with her earnings. She delighted to buy "shirts for Plato," "slippers for Minerva," or to enable "little Raphael" to take the drawing lessons for which she longed so much. Wonderfully did her home dress-making and bonnet trimming eke out her slender income — forty dollars in her wise hands fitted out the family in comfort for a winter, and left a little to buy a ribbon now and then for the younger sisters. These were the years when her father characterized them as being "as poor as poverty but serene as heaven."

While he philosophized, Louisa loved him and worked with the spirit and vim of a man to earn a few of the comforts of life for the family. Could she only have looked forward a few years to see more than her wildest hopes realized — the dear Marmee surrounded with everything to make her happy and her own stories called for faster than she could write them — perhaps the burden would have been easier to bear in those years of toil and privation. To make the struggle more bitter, sorrow came, for Beth, next to May the youngest sister, never recovered from the scarlet fever but faded away gradually for two years, until, indeed, there was "an angel in the house" but, alas! no sister Beth. No one can tell how Louisa felt the loss of this sister, who had always been her

especial charge, as May had been Anna's. Beth's part in "Little Women" is true to life and must there be read to be appreciated.

A year before the death of Beth, the family had again moved to Concord, this time to the house known now as the Alcott Home — Orchard House, the home of "Little Women."

Though Fields, the editor of the *Atlantic*, had once sent word to Miss Alcott to stick to her teaching, for she could never succeed at writing, in 1860 we find her productions in such demand by that periodical, that she was a regular contributor. This year she labels, "A year of good luck," for, besides her own rising fortunes, her father had been elected superintendent of the Concord schools, in which position he delighted all his patrons. Her dream seemed really to be coming true!

In 1861, war broke out. As before mentioned, Miss Alcott was a strong Abolitionist. To her other cares was now added sewing and knitting for the "Boys in Blue," and as she did everything else, so she did this with hearty good-will. She wished that she were a man so that she might go to war. Characteristic of her sensible self, however, she wasted no time in vain regrets, but decided that if she could not fight she could care for those who did, and so she

decided to go to the hospital in Georgetown to nurse. She was eminently fitted for the place, as she had always been the nurse of the family. Her summons came in November, 1862, shortly after she had volunteered. Her experience in the badly-ventilated wards of the hospital was more bitter than she expected, for she missed the freedom of her former life, her run in the morning in the bracing air,—and, in spite of her determination, she grew sick. At first, she was bound not to notice the aching sickness that possessed her, and when it was suggested that she had better go home or she would die of the typhus she was surely contracting, she refused. Still she watched and cheered those to whom she ministered, many of whom, alas! looked on her face, were grateful for her service so tenderly rendered, but turned their own faces away to hide the tears that would come, as they thought of dear ones far away whom they would never again see in this world. A day came, however, when she had to keep her room, but even then she refused to leave her post, until one evening, through a mist of delirium, she beheld her father. Then she knew that they had sent for him and that she must go.

The horrors of that sick journey, with its dimly-remembered incidents, and then, after loving hands undid her wraps, the long blank that followed, are

recalled vividly in her journal. Only the tenderest home-care preserved her to do her best work for us, and even then, she arose to do the remaining tasks of life much broken in constitution. She never wholly regained her old health and vigor. While in the hospital, her duties there had not entirely occupied her, for in her interval of rest, the first half of the twenty-four hours, she found time to write for the *Commonwealth*, "Hospital Sketches." Written in a brisk style, and true to what they represented, these sketches at once became very popular, for they told just what people wanted most to know. There were plenty to write of the battle-fields, where victories were lost or won, but people wanted to know the rest of the thrilling story — how the poor fellows in the hospitals recovered or died. There was at once a call for the sketches in book form, and two publishers asked the privilege of bringing them out. From the time the book appeared, Louisa Alcott became known and loved throughout the land. It established her reputation, and she was cheered in the new life to which she awakened after her long illness.

Notwithstanding that exciting experiences and fame had come to her, she could not forget the gentle sister Beth, and she longed for the presence which now came only in dreams. The family had been further

decreased by the marriage of Anna, and her loss, too, was felt by Louisa, whose love for her family was one of her strongest characteristics.

With increased means at her hand and these losses troubling her heart, it is no wonder that she thought of a visit to Europe for a change, so in 1865 she crossed the water. She was gone about a year and returned much refreshed. In one of the out-of-the-way places she sought in order to rest, she met a young Polish boy, who very much interested her, and who was the original of Laurie in the story of "Little Women." In England, she saw Thackeray and Dickens, and heard the latter read. This she considered one of the privileges of her life, as Dickens had always been a favorite with her.

On her return home she found plenty to do. The mother, who had stood so well the battle of life, was breaking under the weight of years and of cares, and one of the greatest joys Louisa ever had, was caring for her and providing her with comforts during her last years.

Shortly after her return, too, Roberts Brothers of Boston, the present publishers of her works, requested her to write a story for girls. She had always cared more for boys and would rather have written a book for them, but when the publishers repeated their

request a year later, she merely said, in historic phrase, "I'll try, sir." She did try and with what effect all the world knows, for "Little Women" is read by young people everywhere, having been translated into many foreign languages. The book so delighted the publishers and its readers that a sequel was demanded in which the characters should marry. To satisfy this demand she wrote part second which, though inferior to the first part as sequels usually are, was equally well received. The two parts were completed within seven months after the request was made. To add to the charm of the book there was a biographical interest, for nearly all the characters were living people — the Alcott girls were the Little Women.

Her own statement of how much was taken from real life is interesting in this connection: "Facts that are true, though often changed as to time and place: The early plays and experiences; Beth's death, Jo's literary and Amy's artistic experiences; Meg's happy home; John Brooke and his death; Demi's character. Mr. March did not go to war but Jo did. Mrs. March is all true, only not half good enough. Laurie is not an American boy, though every lad I ever knew claims the character. He was a Polish boy, met abroad in 1865. Mr. Lawrence is my grandfather, Colonel Joseph May. Aunt March is no one." It was **this**

very writing of things she knew about that lifted this work above all that she had written before. She had tried various experiments with her pen which had at last found its true vocation. She, herself, says, "We really lived most of it, and if it succeeds that is the reason."

At last she was able to pay all the family debts, which she once said she would do if she had to sell her hair to do it. She was fast approaching the ideal state she had pictured for herself and family.

The year after "Little Women" was written, she spent largely in recreation trying to regain the health she had lost. Another trip to Europe followed and under pleasanter circumstances than those of her first visit, for she had increased means, and at this time she took May with her that she might pursue her chosen art in the land of artists. The rest was beneficial in every way and had but one cloud — the death at home of their brother-in-law, John Pratt. During this interval she had written "Little Men." The receipts for her books were large. At the age of forty she had realized her dream — she had paid every debt, even the outlawed ones, and she and her family were independent. Now, indeed, they could smile on the old days of poverty and serenity.

Wealth has its bereavements, as poverty has, and

the one that came to the Alcotts this time was the fading away of the dear mother. Her decline was so gradual that Louisa found time in the intervals of nursing to make visits to friends in Boston and New York, where she was much sought after. Her fame came to her most sweetly and not the less so that it made her father's lecture progress in the West easier.

While at home watching her mother, she wrote "Under the Lilacs." Few who read and enjoy this story with its pranks and general cheerfulness, can realize how the heart of its author ached as she wrote its chapters running over with merriment. She sent May again to Europe, for Concord seemed dull for her artistic fancies. Late in 1877, the mother died, and though the family had long known that they could not keep her, the warmth seemed gone out of life when she was no longer among them. The best of Louisa's poems, "Transfiguration" was a tribute to her mother :

" Oh, noble woman ! never more a queen
Than in the laying down
Of scepter and of crown
To win a greater kingdom yet unseen.

Teaching us how to seek the highest goal,
To earn the true success,—
To live, to love, to bless,—
And make death proud to take a royal soul."

May was still in Europe when her mother died, but a kind friend of kindred tastes came often to console her. In time the two were married, and they made their home in Paris, where her painting and his music, made a little domestic Eden. After two years of ideal happiness, the young wife died, leaving a desolate home on each side of the water. She bequeathed her infant daughter to her sister Louisa. At the time, the request seemed small recompense for the full life that had gone out in its stead. In her last years, however, Louisa found this child to be one of her greatest blessings, and to her we owe the collection of fairy tales called "Lulu's Library," for these were the stories Miss Alcott had told the little child who came to her across the seas.

Though Miss Alcott had little sympathy with philosophers it was gratifying to her when her father was established in his Concord School of Philosophy, for at last, teaching in that little, unpainted building in his own garden, the people who were anxious to hear, he had realized his highest ambition as a teacher.

Miss Alcott frequently stole away for a season in Boston or for a rest at Nonquitt, her summer home. Her health steadily declined, however, so that when her father was stricken for the last time with apoplexy, she was too weak to wait upon him or to see

him more than once or twice a week. We know how they died, two days apart, in April of 1888. After a funeral of the simplest sort, Louisa was buried in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery at the feet of her father and mother, there to guard in death those whom she had so loyally served during life.

Miss Alcott's appearance has been described by one who knew her well in the following words: "She was striking and impressive rather than beautiful. Her figure was tall and well proportioned, indicating strength and activity and she walked with freedom and majesty. Her head was large, and her rich, brown hair was long and luxuriant, giving a sense of fulness and richness of life to her massive features. While thoroughly unconventional, and even free and easy in her manner, she had a dignity of deportment which prevented undue liberties, and made intruders stand in awe of her." She never married, but she made the younger of her two nephews her heir. Though it is estimated that more than a million of her books have been sold, we value more than this success, the example she has left us of a true-hearted, energetic woman, always first to promote the interests of her sex and of humanity as she was to care for those nearest to her.

QUESTIONS ON LOUISA MAY ALCOTT.

What were the characteristics of Miss Alcott's parents?

How did these show themselves in her?

Speak of some of the peculiarities shown by Miss Alcott as a child.

Are there any traces of these in her mature literary work, and if so, how did they show themselves?

What was the Fruitlands experiment?

What similar experiment was made in New England at about the same time? Results of both?

What was the attitude of the Alcott family toward slavery?

Tell what you can of Miss Alcott's career as a hospital nurse.

Of what literary work was it the foundation?

How was this work received by the people? Why?

Give the story of the writing of "Little Women."

What basis of fact is there for the story?

Why did she write a sequel?

How does it compare with the original story?

Speak of Miss Alcott's power as an actress.

What were some of the things she did for her family?

How did she look? Name several of her best books.

In her writing, what was her strongest point? Her weakest?

SUBJECTS FOR LANGUAGE WORK.

The Real Little Women (The Alcott Girls.)

A Group of Concord Children.

Little Laurie (from "Little Women.")

A Modern Plato (Mr. Alcott.)

Miss Alcott in the Hospital.

Miss Alcott Resting (at Nonquitt, her summer home.)

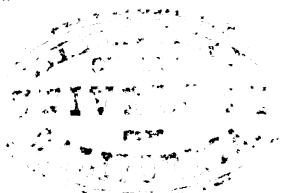
OUTLINE FOR LOUISA MAY ALCOTT.

I. Personal history.

1. Origin of the Alcott family — the ancient coat of arms.
2. The mother's family a notable one — the Mays.
3. Migratory life of the Alcotts.
 - a. Its influence on the family fortunes.
 - b. On the education of the children.
4. Residence at Fruitlands — Its object.
Compare with the Brook Farm experiment.
5. Final settlement at Concord.
6. Companions and pastimes of the Alcott children—
of Louisa in particular.
7. Miss Alcott's early struggle for a livelihood thro'
authorship.
8. Influence of Emerson on Miss Alcott — her hero.
9. A hospital nurse to the "Boys in Blue."
 - a. Severe illness from which she never wholly
recovered.
 - b. Material gathered for "Hospital Sketches."
10. Attempts to regain strength by trips abroad.
11. Loss of mother and sister.
12. Death, two days after her father in 1888.

II. Significant facts in her career as an author.

1. Diary carefully kept from early years.
2. Publication of "Hospital Sketches."
3. Publication of "Little Women."
4. "Journal and Letters."



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